

The impact of interior-architecture on social well-being

Examined by the Plattenbau-Series WBS 70 of the former DDR

from 1961 to 1989

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Final Dissertation to obtain the Master's Degree in Architecture

SCIENTIFIC ORIENTATION

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Lisboa, FA ULisboa, 1st of October, 2018



*ATTENTION, you are now leaving West-Berlin

Cover Figure: A reminding sign to pay attention of the East-West Border,
Photographed on the 6. August 1987, West-Berlin

Abstract

Point of departure: East-Berlin, Germany, 1961.

The former DDR pursued a decentralized economy and social equality for its citizens, which meant that housing, in means of renting an apartment, was only allowed and contracted by the state. Rents should be affordable for all dwellers. Incomes should not decide about the housing conditions. Under this conditions, the DDR Regime started a major construction program in 1973, which should solve the predominant housing issue - as a social problem - until 1990. During the time when the wall fell, almost 30 years ago, the inner cities were in bad shape - and many newly constructed prefabricated buildings were already in need of refurbishment.

Every DDR citizen had the right to dwell in an adequate apartment - this was enshrined in the constitution. But in reality, the housing shortage was still growing and the living conditions were, by far, not as glorious as planned.

While the living conditions in the former DDR have already been extensively studied by many scientists, the following work incorporates already existing research results, which prove how the former dwellers experienced grievance in the area of living. In addition to that, those stated results are covered and compared with empirical research information, in order to clarify the source of the error, from an architectural point of view. For the mentioned statements, empirical data was collected in the form of interviews with former residents of the WBS 70 series. These interviews were recorded, transcribed, translated, analysed and finally compared with the previous results.

The following sheets present the main cause of dissatisfaction, according to a dramatically lack of living space, which executed impact on the entire social life. The large majority of all subjects was affected by this problem and according to their statements, the vast majority of all East-Berlin residents, experienced similar issues. However, this issue can hardly be traced back to a failure in architectural terms, but much more a failure on political levels.

Apart from that, however, positive features emerged as well. Accordingly, this work arrives to the conclusion that interior-architectural situations, very well influence the social well-being of dwellers. With regard to the housing construction series WBS 70, it is clear that a negative impact existed. The inhabitants were very limited in their personal development, which, however, forced them to develop evasive solutions and to rely more on social communication and cooperation. In effect, the limitations of the WBS 70 series, pushed its inhabitants to develop their personality in a thriving way.



S. Figure 1: An elderly group waiting for their bus to work in 1989, East-Berlin

“The neighbourhood helped and traded, (...) if one thing was missing, then surely one of the neighbours next door had it.”

Participant 3

Acknowledgments

At this point, I would like to dedicate thank to all those, who supported and motivated me during the journey to finish this thesis and obtain my Master's Degree in Architecture.

My first thank should be dedicated to Professor Pedro Abreu, who did not only supervise my thesis with foresighted ideas and constructive criticism, but also started to guide my architectural visions and interests since the early beginnings of my studies at Faculdade de Arquitetura. He was the best orientator a student could wish for and I hope to continue those encouraging talks while sharing tea, in the future.

Followed by that, I would like to thank my beloved friends (Portuguese ones, German ones and every other nationality I met during my life in Lisbon). You stood by my side - patient, interested and helpful. I would like to thank you for numerous beautiful talks and interesting debates during those past semesters. You always motivated me when I needed it the most.

A special thank goes to all participants of my survey, without whom this work could not have been finished. Thank you for the willingness to provide private and intimate information about your lives.

Last but not least, I would like to thank my parents, Bettina und Knut Schneider, who supported my studies and sat through missing me, as long as I lived abroad, always putting my academic future first.

“(...) we've always made the best of it! ”
Participant 3



S. Figure 2: East-German workers during their holidays at the East- Sea

1 Introduction

1.1 Leading thesis

The quality of a dwelling is a central indicator for measuring the standards of living, as well as the general well-being¹ of humans. Dwellings do not only serve to identify the differences of lifestyles and classes but moreover, they do classify social situations within the population. A loss of quality of life, due to deficient housing and locations, has been proven many times. This work aims to investigate the social situation of East-Germany, specifically of East-Berlin, referring to the housing conditions inside the Plattebau series WBS 70, before the reunification took place in 1989.

According to socialist guidelines, housing was classified as a basic human need in the former DDR, subsequently, the state was obliged to satisfy those requirements up to an adequate and sufficient level. But primarily, it is necessary to identify what the human rights of housing are and how the DDR defined „a sufficient level of living“ for society. Those guidelines included, first of all, the sufficient availability of housing, secondly, a non-discriminatory affordable access to housing for every citizen and thirdly, a decent quality of living. Consequently, apartments were provided to every citizen for a quite reasonable rent, additioned with extensive dismissal protection. But in spite of everything, while researching DDR material, the former housing situation appeared to be far more unsatisfying for inhabitants as planned by the government. The newly constructed apartments, shown in the media, were far too often, just prestige objects and used as awards to deserving state workers or were drawn to families throughout a lottery. Investments in the first decade of the young republic, flowed directly into the expansion of housing industry. The rehabilitation and expansion of existing old towns did not seem to be suitable for the state leaders. From the beginning, they focused on new buildings, emerging the creation of “socialist cities”.

While an apartment is considered to be a non-work place, housing is therefore understood as a state of leisure, recreation and consumption purified from work. Furthermore, the apartment is considered to be a place of family. The social unity of living, the household, is formed by the group of men, women and their children, fortified by the legal ties and consanguinity. The apartment is the place of privacy, the intimacy is until today terms that are equated with "family" since the 18th century.

¹ Well-being, according to followed Definition. (cf. Chapter 3.2 The principles of well-being in living)

However, in an environment in which precisely those mentioned activities and far more social interaction are inhibited, one's own personal development is endangered. Children, in particular, who need a stable, well-balanced environment to develop themselves and their personality, are strongly affected by unequal living conditions. With regard to the former living conditions, the following work shows the abuses regarding the living conditions in East-Berlin, in relation to the living quarters. This study refers to the prefabricated buildings, within the series WBS 70, which was developed by Wilfried Stallknecht and became the most frequently built building series in the whole DDR. The buildings of the WBS 70 series, decisively shaped the cityscape of East-Germany and most of the former DDR citizens lived in one version of this construction. Due to the selection of the WBS 70 series, this study covers largest possible area of residents. Those dwellers can therefore be merged, as all floor plans, corresponding to socialist ideal, were uniform and repeated over and over again.

This paper is aiming to figure the influence of interior architecture on people's social well-being. This aim will be investigated on the basis of the, already academically confirmed, negative example of some former living situations during the DDR period in East-Germany.

In those mentioned, academic papers, it has already been stated how DDR dwellers suffered from grievances and how former residents were far dissatisfied with their housing situation. These studies, though, were all carried out on a social evaluation basis and have never been architecturally examined. The aim of the following work is to continue the investigations of these previous academics and, from an architectural point of view, to come to a conclusion concerning the interior-architectural situations.

The objective of this dissertation is hereby, to investigate the question, whether those mentioned dwellings failed in an architectural way or not. Subsequently, in the affirmative case, followed by the answer how the interior-architectural design was responsible for this occasion, even though the dwellings have been designed specifically to counteract an increasing domestic dissatisfaction.

Starting with the basic rights to adequate housing, it is important to understand the meaning of this, already mentioned, sufficient level of living. Therefore, the basic requirements for a comfortable dwelling² and their positive, as well as in return, their negative impact on inhabitants will be illustrated in the following chapters.

² A comfortable dwelling, according to the later on described perception, aiming the main focus of attention, onto the presence of numerous suitable locations inside the apartment and favoured space ratios. (cf. Chapter 3.2 The principles of well-being in living)

In the final paragraphs, the outcomes are then contrasted and evaluated with additional data, collected in self-generated empirical studies, by identifying the essential characteristics of interior spaces inside German homes by the time of the Berlin Wall. The empirical data refers to a self-conducted study, operated in form of self-generated interviews and executed in districts of Berlin. Hereby, the test persons, who were all former residents of the, above mentioned, WBS 70 series, were asked about their former living experience. Through specific questions, it was aimed to investigate the principal factors of the already proven grievances in context of housing.

Defining the crucial spaces and elements of impact, was a fundamental component to arrive at conclusions about the reasons of grievance. The end results about the influence of interior-architecture³ on our consciousness transpired through implicating those results on former researches, i.a. Alphons Silbermann's⁴ social studies about East-Berlin dwellings. To achieve all mentioned objectives, it was essential to point out specific questions regarding the interior-architectural sector while incorporating important social and historical components, i.a. the question about social well-being and the principal political circumstances, as well.

In the end, the question of guilt, referring to the dissatisfaction of dwellers and the qualitative deficiencies of apartments, is therefore not directly attributed to the architect or the architecture itself, as researchers and the empirical studies exposed, how the former political circumstances did not offer any other possibility to sidestep those piling issues. Since the apartments were not used, as they were designed for, a judgment on architectural basis is difficult to be developed. There was hardly one case, in which the living space has been adequately inhabited. Furthermore, referring to the fact, that the state was reasonable for the act of distributing apartments, the assignment of guilt evidently manifests in the political area.

Like already mentioned, the domestic areas were not inhabited as planned by the architect, which made the process of evaluation even more difficult, as a misuse of space may naturally lead to additional dissatisfaction. Nevertheless, the interior architecture could still be evaluated separately, in context of ratio and supply of space.

³ Interior-architecture, according to followed Definition. (cf. Chapter 3.3)

⁴ Alphons Silbermann (August 11, 1909 - March 4, 2000) was a German, sociologist, entrepreneur, publicist and an important German pioneer of empirical methods. (cf. Chapter 3.4.3)

These last chapters are closing the thematic by arriving to conclusions about the deficits of the DDR's social housing program, underlined through architectural evaluations on the interiors of Plattenbau series WBS 70 and their limited prospects.

Surprisingly, the interviews released some very emotional sides of the participants. Furthermore, they also stated how adaptable the human being is as a resident. Surprisingly enough, the residents did not complain about their former situation and responded only on clear request to misgivings. Apart from the adaptability, the residents were able to build a strong solidary bond and a community full of comprehension and cooperation. On a social level, the WBS 70 series bonded its inhabitants together and supported their development in an exemplary way.

1.2 Structure of the work

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GENERAL TERMS

DDR.....[dt. Deutsche Demokratische Republik] German Democratic Republic

SED.....[dt. Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands] Socialist Unity Party of Germany

THE WALL.....construction along the border, which divided Berlin from 1961 to 1989

PLATTENBAU.....Platte (in this context: panel) and Bau (building)

WBS 70.....one specific Plattenbau series, built from 1970 until the end of the DDR



S. Figure 3: A cementary, built right next to the former “Death-Strip”

“nobody has the intention to build a wall!”

Walter Ulbricht, chairman of the DDR State Council

2 Historical Background

To complete the following historical methodology, I investigated, by means of bibliographic and cartographic sources, how the iron curtain directly and indirectly influenced domestic architecture in East-Germany and especially in East-Berlin. The architect Wilfried Stallknecht, founder of the most widespread Plattenbau typology WBS 70⁵, has subsequently been analysed to comprehend, how the design was firstly created and then realized in 1970. All those researches are accompanied by specific studies about Stallknecht's interior-architectural ideas and visions.

For the purposes of definition in the first place - Plattenbau was, and is, just the German name for a global phenomenon. Prefabricated buildings are constructions that are assembled from industrially prefabricated, floor-to-ceiling and wall-width panels, as well as corresponding ceiling panels. Looking at prefabricated buildings of the former DDR, those panels basically consisted of concrete. Halász defined these basic modules as "Platte", which is German term for "plate". The corresponding buildings were therefore called "Plattenbau". (Halász 1966, 253.)

However, this terminology has not prevailed. A binding, exact terminology has never developed on the part of the construction tractors. (Hannemann 2000 (1996), 26.) Instead, the panel construction, and sometimes even its basic module, Plattenbau itself, colloquially equated both with the industrial construction and with its results, thereby he described both - a building technique and a building type. The majority of the prefabricated buildings were residential buildings, and this following work, is as well focused on one branch of those residential housing series. It was intended, to largely follow the linguistic convention whose association framework, under panel construction, subsumes technical, construction-organizational, aesthetic and sociological aspects equally. (Haller 2002, 7. 3.) In the DDR nearly four times as many large housing estates were built as in the old Federal Republic, moreover the ten largest new housing areas of Germany were invariably built in the former DDR. (Hannemann, 2000)

East-Germany and especially East-Berlin, is therefore, a well-grounded research base, especially in relation to the selected housing series WBS 70, which was by far the most widely spread one in East-Germany. Through focusing on the former dwellers of prefabricated buildings, regarding the following research aims, it was possible to locate and include a broad target group throughout the city.

⁵ WBS 70 (Wohnungsbauserie 70th series) is a type of dwelling that was built in the German Democratic Republic using slab construction. It was developed in the early 1970s by the German Academy of Architecture (see Chapter 4.3 The Plattenbau-Series 'WBS 70' from 1970).

2.1 The Formation of the former DDR

When the ultimate defeat of Hitler's Germany became apparent, the Allies - France, Great Britain, the United States and the Soviet Union - negotiated a territorial redistribution of the country.

They divided the positioning of the German-Reich ⁶ in four occupation-zones and agreed on a special status for the German capital city, Berlin. The city needed to stay capable to receive joint military commands in the future. The



Figure 1: Illustrated territorial division of Germany

determination of occupation sectors was based on the old state, respectively the city district boundaries and with the participation of the country, Hitler's system of power could finally be destroyed.

In the following years, the effects caused by the conflicting interests between Soviet Union and the other allies, became apparent through the installation of different political and economic systems. In the Soviet-occupation-zone⁷, socioeconomic conditions were forced as a principle basis for the establishment of a popular democracy, derived from the Soviet model. Within a short time, a communist one-party system has been enforced and the economy was completely transferred to a new scheme, called Planwirtschaft⁸, ruled by the socialization of property. On June 24, the Soviet Military Administration enhanced their state, by introducing the Ostmark⁹ in the Eastern occupation zone. (Kaminsky, 2009, pp. 20-21)

Three and a half million people flee from the Soviet occupation zone to the Federal Republic between 1945 and 1961. There were several comprehensible reasons for emigration, to name just a few, a lot of families had relatives in the West, some were deprived of land, disadvantaged and

⁶ Deutsches-Reich (Eng.: German empire) was the official name of the German nation between 1871 and 1945 and at the same time the constitutional name of Germany until 1943.

⁷ The Soviet Occupation Zone, Soviet Zone or East Zone was one of the four occupation zones divided by the Allied victorious powers of World War II in 1945, according to the Yalta Conference.

⁸ Industrial planning and management of the economy, in which the entire process is planned, directed and managed by a central position according to political and economic goals.

⁹ Ostmark, the legal currency of the DDR from 1948 to 1990; 4 Ostmark equate to 1 Euro.

persecuted as Christians, the supply was dramatically bad in comparison to the West or just the fact that political freedom died under the socialist regime. (Kaminsky, 2009, p. 21)

Anyhow, what particularly threatened the DDR government, was the fact that a huge percentage among those emigrants were young, well-trained and skilled workers who were urgently needed for the economic recovery. Besides that, many East Berliners also took advantage of the opportunity to live relatively cheaply in the eastern part of the city while receiving a far higher salary in the western sector. Even though they were paid in a differing currency, the income could be easily exchanged to East-Mark afterwards.

The regime leaders saw themselves forced to counteract these developments and on May 26, 1952, military units blocked the border to the Federal Republic with barbed wire. Due to the allied status of the city, traffic continued over the remaining 81 sector crossings. But already in December 1957, the SED¹⁰ leadership started to tighten the criminal laws: leaving the DDR was from now on prosecuted as a "republic escape" and punishable by imprisonment up to three years. Even preparation and attempt were already threatened with jail. One year later, the Berlin blockade began and all access routes to West-Berlin were completely interrupted by the Soviet side. The western part of the city, as well as all vital supply routes, were cut off from one day to another. Deliveries of coal, electricity and food failed to be operated from there on. (Eisenfeld & Engelmann, 2001, pp. 25-28)

Nevertheless, already more than two million citizens had left the Soviet-occupation-zone to the West, following an upward trend, which could not be stopped by those rashly introduced laws. The regime had only two options to ensure the population of the Eastern area: either to permanently control all access routes to West-Berlin, including the air corridor – or the ultimate construction of a wall. As controlling the airway turned out to be unfeasible, the immediate border closure was decided by Walter Ulbricht¹¹. (Eisenfeld & Engelmann, 2001, p. 41)

Walter Ulbricht, who was the chairman of the DDR State Council wrote history, not only for approving to the construction of the Berlin-Wall, but also through a legendary press conference on June 15, 1961 - in which he proudly stated in front of the whole nation, that there is no reason to worry, because "*nobody has the intention to build a wall!*".

¹⁰ SED, The Socialist Unity Party of Germany, established in April 1946, was the governing Marxist–Leninist political party of the DDR.

¹¹ Walter Ernst Paul Ulbricht, SED-leader and most important politician of the DDR, from 1949 to his disempowerment in 1971.

GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY

border

HALT CHECKPOINT

HALT HIER CHECKPOINT

1. concrete wall

2. concrete wall

3. concrete wall

4. concrete wall

5. concrete wall

6. concrete wall

7. concrete wall

8. concrete wall

9. concrete wall

10. concrete wall

11. concrete wall

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20. concrete wall

21. concrete wall

- | | | | |
|----|--|----|--|
| 1 | Borderline with Border-Stones | 11 | Concrete Observation Tower BT 11 |
| 2 | Border demarcation sign | 12 | Concrete Observation Tower, 2 x 2 meters |
| 3 | GDR marking post, 1.8 meters high | 13 | Concrete observation bunker |
| 4 | 100 meter strip of terrain | 14 | Light barrier |
| 5 | Double metal grid fence | 15 | Contact point for underground reporting net |
| 6 | Gateway in metal grid fence | 16 | Dog runway |
| 7 | Single metal grid fence, 3.2 meters high | 17 | Restricted zone fence with electrical, acoustic alarms |
| 8 | Vehicle barrier ditch | 18 | Concrete Wall/Screen |
| 9 | 6 meter plowed detection strip | 19 | Gateway in restricted zone fence |
| 10 | Patrol Road | 20 | Border Controll |

Less than two months later, during the night of 12th to 13th August 1961, the SED leadership began to build the Berlin Wall. The demarcation was connected with a huge effort. To prevent a mass panic, the project start was set on a Sunday. Already at night and in the early in the morning, roads were closed and the city's transport system has been reorganized. In order to maintain public transport within East Berlin, bus drivers from other DDR districts were withdrawn for support.

The concrete construction was splitting the country into two parts, from one day to the other, it changed the life of Berlin and its inhabitants completely. Thousands of Berlin's families were torn apart by building the wall, couples separated, friendships destroyed and neighborhoods ended. Countless people lost their jobs, their livelihood and their perspectives. The new border system was expanded over the years and in the end displayed by barbed wire fences, ditches, concrete walls, so-called "death strips", self-firing systems, mines and above all - people. The well-known distrust of the DDR government towards its own citizens, deprived them of the right to determine their own lives in freedom. (Peter, 2006)

2.2 Introducing DDR-Architecture

2.2.1 Political intentions and their consequences

The subject of socialist housing construction and its specifics can hardly be explored without clarifying a historical classification and the regime's political intentions in the first place. The ideals of solitary construction are historically, politically and industrially rooted. Its understanding is necessary for an accurate assessment of the former housing constructions and their outcome. In September and October, houses directly located on the border received eviction orders and more than 2.000 residents

were expelled from their homes. In the following years, the eastern sector went through a period of fundamental changes - socially, economically and also from architectural nature.

Nevertheless, due to the previous emigrations of young inhabitants, a striking labor shortage raised through East-Berlin. As a result, the regime strongly relied on women's employment, which in turn, led to further unintentional consequences. While the labour market was secured for the present, the new labour organization implicated strong transformations within the average family life. As an average DDR family had one to two children, the situation became quite overwhelming for working women, according to former residents. Since the family, as an institution, was still traditional and strongly patriarchal, the domestic work remained to the mothers. Due to that, a lot of women started suffering from health problems within their long working hours and the lack of child care. The average DDR-women had already reached her own maximum workload. As a result of those burdens, the birth rate within the DDR declined continuously. In 1972, it fell to 58.6 percent and in 1975, it reached its minimum of 52.3 percent. This mixed situation led to the priority of family support as a central area of social policy. This ideal was based on an effective combination of family and housing, as a preferred allocation of housing to families and should also promote a rise of fertility level.

The family itself belonged to the socialist system of the DDR and was dependent on values and rules to ensure the self-preservation process of society. Family and society should "form a unity which could not create any antagonistic contradictions" (Busch, 1988, p.106). By this means, the



Figure 3: Division of Germany, 1961 - 1989, illustrated

family could never be considered detached from society. The task was to reconcile the personal interests of the individual within interests of the whole society.

To develop well-functioning family involving politics, the DDR considered the socialist family to be the smallest cell of a socialist society. This implied that the family has been seen as a fundamental collective that, organically combined with other collectives such as the labour and the socialist party, formed the social environment of the individual



Figure 4: Portraiture of a „socialist Family“, living in former East-Berlin

being and the family. This corresponding political model of the family was fixed in 1965 via an official book, called "The Family Law", which replaced the previously valid parts of the civil rights. Those new guidelines contained among other things: "The family is the smallest cell in society. It is based on the commitment that binds us to life and on the particularly close ties that arise on the emotional levels between woman and man and the relationships of mutual love, esteem and trust between all family members". (Brockhaus Dictionary, 1961, p. 16)

Another major task of being a former DDR citizen, was to ensure the development of partner and children into "socialized personalities". The family code should therefore serve as a "standard of orientation for a proper socialist behaviour, which should be realized by the family members themselves".¹² This was thus, far determined by the regime, as it should become the main task of a socialist family. The fact that the socialist family was seen as a banning of the bourgeois family, explains that one of the basic conditions, namely the relationship between the public and the private sphere, was considered as abrogated.

The DDR's perception of the standardized socialist family, obtained fundamental importance for the development of ground plan concepts and equipment catalogues for residential areas in Berlin.

¹² Family Code, 1973. (Ger.: Familiengesetzbuch der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik, 20. Dezember 1973, GBl. I Nr. 1, S. 1)

The planning of dwellings and residential areas was intended for becoming the structural and spatial framework for all those, above mentioned, socialist ideals.

The regime had a very clear perception of how every citizen should adequately behave in-between his/her four walls and among their family. But aside from that, the regime favoured some external activities as well. Cinema, theatre and museums - the recreational offer in the DDR was diverse. System-critical content was of course prohibited and was censored before being published. Leisure activities served socialist education. What did not comply with the principles of the SED government was immediately sawn off. Literature became a hard purchasable good as well.

Additional to that, sport events gained a high priority in the DDR. Children and adolescents competed regularly in competitions. Anyone talented was immediately promoted to attend a sports school and be trained to become a competitive athlete. Achievements, such as the Olympic medal winners in Moscow from 1980, represented also a victory of socialism over capitalism for the DDR. Those former ideals are therefore necessary to be, at least partly researched and understood, as they need to be taken into account, to better understand the mind-set, desires and objectives of East-German dwellers during the DDR period.

One more form of expression must be incorporated as well. In DDR's society, art played a classical role. Art shaped the ideas, desires and needs of classes in historical situations and served as an ideological weapon among the class struggle by manipulating people's feelings, thoughts and desires with their own power. Subsequently, by the Marxist-Leninist¹³ conception, art was recognized as one side of the realization and reality of man, art should be a part in the process of self-generation. Art makes a significant contribution to the creation and development of the wealth of the human personality, especially of senses and feelings, the development of social imagination and the shaping of the human environment. Under the leadership of



Figure 5: The painting "Hausfassade" (1974) by Wolfram Ebersbach

¹³ Marxism–Leninism was the ideology of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU). The purpose of Marxism–Leninism is the revolutionary development of a bourgeois state into a socialist state, realised through the leadership of a party vanguard, composed of professional revolutionaries from the working class.

the working class party, the development of art, in the socialist Cultural Revolution, was proceeding an all-round development, based on the evolvement of all creative powers. At the same time, the working class, through its social action, created a historically new relationship

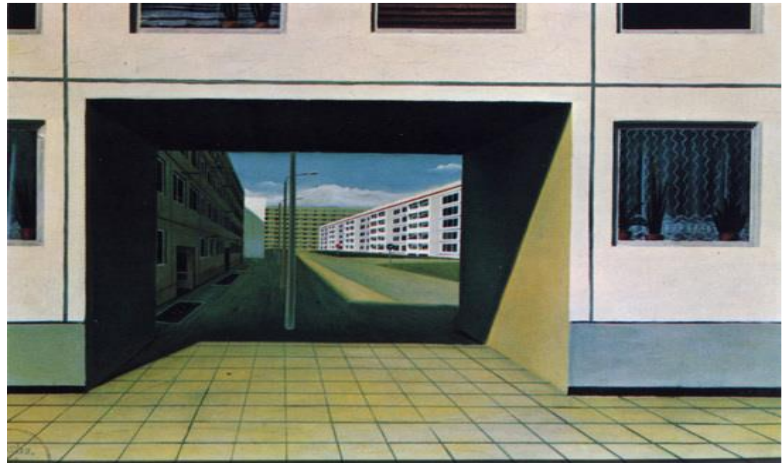


Figure 6: The painting "Passage in Halle-Neustadt" (1971) by Uwe Pfeifer

between art and society, which shaped socialist art and set the conditions for its comprehensive development. According to the theory of socialist realism, the art of a socialist society was formulated as a special way of production, which were products of social work.

2.2.2 Unity and equality

The socialist idea of the approximation of classes, with special regard to essential living conditions such as income, education and housing, was carried out throughout all DDR history.

Of course, the ideal of equality was not a genuine "invention" of the Marxism-Leninism, but rather a goal for social development, which played an important role in social-philosophical thinking since antiquity. According to Meyer, within the framework of the development stages of the modern emancipation movement, three levels of social relations could be distinguished, to which the equality postulate could be applied: (1) "The equality of rights, which demands equality within applicable laws, (2) the political equality, which demands the equality of citizens" and (3) "the social equality, which strives beyond the first two forms of economic, cultural and social equality." (Meyer, 1986, p. 233)

But only in social equality, which means - the equality of all living conditions among the overall picture, the workers' movement could see the consistent completion of the demand for equality. Marx and Engels wrote, while declaring a society in the Communist Manifesto, that the free development of everyone, is the important condition for the free development of all society." (Marx / Engels, 1848, p. 482)

The concept of social approximation, in the perception of DDR ideology, referred to "the process of growth and further expression of the socioeconomic, political and ideological similarities of the working classes and strata of socialist society and the gradual reduction of social differences among them." (Dictionary, 1983, p. 23)

This process, understood as a constant "higher development", lead to the dismantling of social differences in all areas of society, which resulted from the "division of labour" in the first place. This was especially true, referring to the traditional capitalist housing conditions, which were about to be replaced by a new socialist housing architecture. Thus, housing policy was a key factor in this context, Friedrich Engels expected the solution of the housing problem, easily summarized, in socialism. The SED was seeking for legitimacy in exactly this area.

Siegfried Grundmann¹⁴, urban sociologist at the Academy of Social Sciences at the Central Committee of the SED in 1984, formulated this problem summarily as a gradual reduction of social inequality, for the housing and urban policy of the DDR. Not "the existence of warring classes and

¹⁴ Siegfried Grundmann, born 1938, sociology. Project leader at the Berlin Institute for Social Studies. Since the beginning of the 70s researching in the area "Sociology of the Territory".

the deepening of social contradictions, but rather the gradual reduction of social differences was henceforth the fundamental law in the social structure of cities." (Grundmann, 1984, p. 205) The socialist housing complexes were, at the same time, generators and expressionists of socialism. The so-called socialist residential complex, switched to become the character of a symbolic form. "The socialist housing complex, whose peculiarity is, that it should be conceived, built and inhabited as a unit, bared the quality of a whole small town in itself. Living inside the prefabricated buildings of a socialist residential complex meant the utmost functionalization of everyday and social life.

The structural implementation of this claim, meant to create equal and comfortable living conditions for all: "Solving the housing problem, in means of a social problem, meant: the approximation of housing conditions of all classes and layers of the population." (Kuhn, 1985, p. 29) This demand was increasingly reflected in the concepts of urban planning, especially at the end of the 60s and beginning of the 70s. One of the best known examples of the deliberately formulated implementation of the equality postulate in urban and residential construction of the DDR could be found in the housing policy and urban plans of Halle-Neustadt. (Hannemann, 1996, p. 25)

To enforce this egalitarian ideology and to accelerate the construction of identical and comfortable apartments for all habitants, the work should be carried out in a heavy pace. The building plans of Berlin were commented as following: "Everyone must house in the same apartments and under the same conditions. There should be no differentiation according to income classes, origin or occupational groups. The differences between individual lifestyles and personality types were levelled out and differences of interests were eliminated." (Autorenkollektiv, 1972, p. 85)

Therefore, one of the most important guidelines to create a housing system of quality, was the core-image of a representative DDR-family. Standardized, it included two different sequences: a married couple or a married couple plus children. The family's task was, beside reproduction, the support of descendants and the children's education to "socialist personalities", which meant, ensuring loyalty to the system.

Young and large families benefited from the housing allocation. Full-time employments were propagated. In order to achieve this goal, day care centres, nurseries, all-day schools and youth clubs were set up within the Plattenbau housing estates. However, the concept of day care for children continued among this housing concept, due to the average size of 10m², constructed for nursery rooms, which were planned for two children according to the program of the socialist party. (SED Program, 1982, p. 56)

The ideological ideas of the "socialist nuclear family" found its expression in reality until the 80s. The "socialist nuclear family" appeared as one of the few aspects of SED ideology that were actually lived out. This could as well be seen by the quantitative and qualitative comparison of family forms existing in the DDR, which were examined by the family sociology department of the state. (Hannemann, 1996, pp. 108-109)

The women's report, published in 1990 by former staff of the Institute of Sociology and Social Policy of the Academy of Sciences, described the situation as following: "The economic unit 'household' - as a link between families and the economic structures of a society - largely fell together with the nuclear families, in the DDR." (Winkler, 1990, p. 101) Nevertheless, this ideology of social equality and the fixation on the representative picture of families, led to the standardisation of housing plans.

Another step to achieve a complete socialist housing scheme, was the way of awarding apartments. During the former DDR, the only way to rent an apartment was to send an application to the KWV¹⁵. This company was in the hands of the state and was supposed to be supportive, in order to give all tenants the same access to apartments. The KWV was the only authority in charge to distribute apartments and conclude contracts. While all tenants should have had equal opportunities to rent an apartment, the reality was different. According to many statements (see Annex 1), it was heavily dependent on how close a family supported the regime, whether they gained the possibility to rent a large apartment, or even an apartment at all. Support of the regime should always be rewarded. Although this fact was not allowed to be handled publicly, it was of course not a secret.

In the beginning of the 50s, when the population became more and more dissatisfied with their overall living situation, the Council of Ministers was forced to react with improvement measures. In terms of building policy, they tried to shift from industrial to residential construction. This task was defined as a very substantial part of building policy effort, within the ambitious DDR housing program. More than 200 billion marks¹⁶ of the state, were to be spent between 1976 and 1990 for the purpose of constructing or modernizing around three million dwellings. In a largely industrialized construction industry, where craftsmanship traditions could hardly be maintained, the focus was mostly set on building instead of modernization.

¹⁵ KWV, which is the short term for "Kommunale Wohnungs Verwaltung", engl. Municipal Housing Administrations. The KWVs were state-owned enterprise (VEB) formed companies that were active in the management and administration of urban real estate, in the former DDR.

¹⁶ 1 East-Mark equates to 0, 5 Euro.

But nonetheless, Khrushchev's¹⁷ slogan "better, faster and cheaper" was still the primarily guiding principle of the DDR. Construction works could always be shortened, costs always reduced. The fundament for prefabricated buildings was set in this period of time and as manual construction proved to be unsuitable, due to its high costs and time consume, the first fully mechanized building was constructed in 1955. The whole process was divided into three phases: Prefabrication, transport and erection.

The panel construction method is a construction method within the group of prefabricated constructions. In most cases, this methods are used in particular for residential and office buildings, which are mounted from prefabricated concrete slabs in factories, while the individual components can be assembled on site later on. Partial prefabricated panels were also used, for instance as facades. Those concrete elements were and are still characterized by longevity and, more important in DDR times, low maintenance costs. Another obvious advantage was, of course, that numerous working steps could be carried out in factory buildings regardless of any weather. Also the assembly of structures themselves, could be carried out relatively quickly. (Richter, 2006, p. 13; 19)



Figure 7: Black and white picture from the 1980s: Construction site of WBS 70 complex in Gorbitz, Germany

Reaching a well-functioning routine, the state was able to build three and a half WBS 70 apartments per day, when everything was done properly. Assembly and extension of an apartment took on average of 18 hours. Accordingly, the construction industry was ready to rebuild the city of Berlin.

¹⁷ Nikita Sergeyevich Khrushchev was a Soviet statesman, who led the Soviet Union from 1953 to 1964.

2.2.3 The permanent fight against construction costs

Already during the early 50s, technical preparative works for an industrialization of construction arose. Within the standardization of the measure system, the requirements for initial standardization were founded. On this basis, the floor plan series W 53 was projected, in 1953 at the German Building Academy, which was updated in 1956 to floor plan W 56. In the following years, they were redeveloped to the type series L 4 (1958), Q 3 (1958) and Q 6 (1960), always keeping the goal to increase effectiveness in mind. Those buildings were still carried out in traditional brick construction.

The prefabricated construction method, which was established afterwards, did not surpass the large-block construction method quantitatively until 1970. The economic effects, lagged behind the hopes and prognoses, and the development of prefabricated types were accompanied by a constant solidification of the floor plans, as well as demands for their reduction.

The introduction of type series Qx, developed in 1961 at the Dresden University of Technology, would have permitted more variable room widths, but was withdrawn in 1962 as a result due to the decision of Council of Ministers to reduce the average size of the dwellings. Housing sizes were a key factor as well, on the 33rd plenum¹⁸ of the Central Committee SED 1959. The main demands included, firstly, the housing policy, with clarity on a new set of measurements of housing. Likewise, the equipment of the apartments, the application of types, the number of storeys and the development of housing costs has been defined.



Figure 8: Q3, Heinrich-Heine-Viertel, Berlin., 1960



Figure 9: Q3, front and back design of the facades

¹⁸ At the 33rd plenum of the Central Committee of the SED in 1959, fundamental decisions were taken on questions of housing construction in the GDR.

Special attention was also drawn to the creation of specialized production departments in state-owned enterprises. It was demanded to synchronize the work by means of clockwork, in order for the construction workers to work continuously, time-saving and correspondingly cost-effectively. The party also assessed how Plattenbau constructions had passed their test of efficiency positively and should from then on be established even stronger. From now on, more than 50 percent of the entire DDR housing construction should take place in bulk block construction. This mass production of components should reduce the building costs drastically.

AVERAGE SIZE OF AN APARTMENT UNIT	
1955	63m ² on average
1956	66m ² on average
1957	65m ² on average
1968	55m ² on average
1970	53,6m ² on average

Figure 10: Apartment size development, according to different years during the DDR

To understand the strong concerns about the construction budget among the SED housing program, one must remember that the DDR's five-year plan was to achieve the goal of handing over 100,000 homes a year to the population from 1960 onwards. By introducing the slab construction method, a total labour cost reduction of 62% was expected. It is perhaps no coincidence that all of that happened in 1961, the year of the installation of the Berlin Wall, which temporarily provided the DDR with a bloody economic and cultural modernization boost. As the variance of window formats fell victim to the economic unification constraints, due to the rigid joint grids, Plattenbau construction types of the DDR could be easily recognized, in particular, by those characteristic grids. Another characteristic of the newly introduced DDR architecture, was the movement of rooms that were not directly used for living (stairs, bathroom, kitchen), towards the inside of the building. Their absence was, even more than the joint grid, an essential feature of 1966 introduced series. (Richter, 2006, pp. 37-38)

The above-mentioned outsourcing of household functions served to justify a radical reduction of bathrooms, kitchens and children's rooms. A three-room apartment had then been built on the area of a former two-room apartment. These buildings were the expression of a systemic dilemma. Were they once conceived as modular systems and ought to have counteracted the uniformity - with elements that could be used variable - was precisely that uniformity, in retrospect, more visible than ever.

2.2.4 Construction-strategies

The radical standardization of construction led to the development of the residential building system Type 70 (WBS 70) in the late 1960s. This Plattenbau Typology was almost exclusively built, starting from the mid-1970s until the very end of the DDR. The cost-saving measures, implied as well on the WBS 70, as on other typologies before, also influenced the overall picture of East-Berlin's inner city. Indeed, from the 70s onwards, a peculiar process of colour-fading could be observed among those buildings, which was as well connected to the saving of costs, in the sense that the WBS-70 panels often showed their bare outer surfaces, coarse, grey-brown concrete, from which they existed.

As a metaphor for monotony and anonymisation, industrial architecture had repeatedly become the subject of literature and film until the end of the DDR.

Leipzig's art-historian Thomas Topfstedt¹⁹ described the aesthetic caesura, in the midst of traditional Stalinallee²⁰, as following: "Industrial technology fundamentally changed the appearance of large panel constructions in particular. The outer walls of these houses, built from storey high panels, do not represent a static function anymore – in context of the traditional house construction. Therefore, a construction design theme for the new buildings in East-Germany, became completely irrelevant." (Urban, 2008, p. 26)



Figure 11: A view onto the prestige roundabout of Stalin-Allee, East Berlin, in August 1961

On one hand, the apartments were modernized, as they had firstly included an indoor toilet, bathroom and kitchen, but on the other hand, they were often built with inadequate building materials and did not take account of any individual requirements. Another problem was the often criticized and inefficient district heating network, which was heating the buildings uncontrollably, pushing the residents to open all accessible windows for temperature regulation. Although energy prices rose sharply in 1979, rents remained low. As a result, there were few incentives to save energy and the costs continued climbing upwards.

¹⁹ Professor for architecture and urban planning, monument preservation. Further research interests: Art of the DDR.

²⁰ The Karl-Marx-Allee is a monumental socialist boulevard built by the GDR between 1952 and 1960 in Berlin Friedrichshain and Mitte. Today the boulevard is named after Karl Marx.

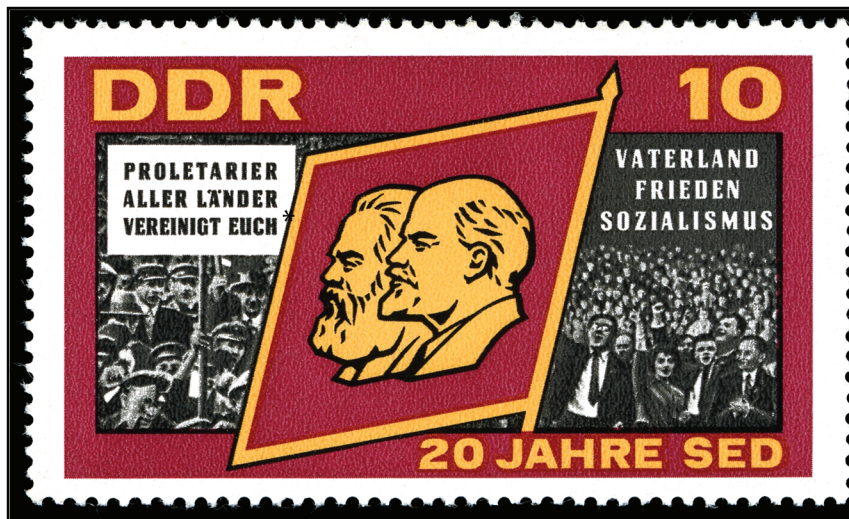


Figure 12: The first ever built WBS 70, in Neubrandenburg, now a heritage

The overall Plattenbau typologies were forced by the party leadership, as they did not only serve the housing supply, but also the overcoming of inequalities between classes. In those complexes, as mentioned above, child care facilities, schools, shops and medical care were planned to be included as well. However, the construction of this supporting infrastructures was often postponed to save costs. The old buildings in Berlin, at the same time, offered simultaneously less and less quality of living, because financial means and the missing political will to invest in rehabilitation. The Regime was not able to reach the three million, newly planned or refurbished apartments, until 1990. Due to that, a concurrently shortage of housing persisted until the very end of the DDR.



Figure 13: WBS 70 Elevation



*Workers of the world, Unite

*Patria, Peace, Socialism

*20 Years SED

S. Figure 4: Former Stamp, illustrating the unification of proletarians

“Family and society
should form a unity,
which could not
create any antagonis-
tic contradictions.”
Busch (1988)



S. Figure 5: Photography of a “communist family”, Berlin, 10. November 1993

3 The dissatisfaction of East-German dwellers

3.1 The sociology of architecture

Dwellings are far more than a protection from the external environment – this statement should be indisputable and does not need to be discussed anymore. Dwellings are, moreover, prerequisite for psychological well-being and social security. They should provide privacy, a place for one's personal needs and the development of one's character. But as well as that, homes should also stage enough space for social contacts, may we call it, the living room or another different area.

It can be said, that dwellings are not from cognitive purely rational or technical entity, but strongly emotional, as they can almost be seen as the "completion of the whole person". Dwellings and the city - both need individuality, as only those correspond to the individuals they inhabit and so it is worthwhile to find out what a „good“ dwelling or even a „good“ city could be. Heinrich Zille²¹ has claimed once, that people can be killed by housing in the wrong apartment, like they could be killed by an ax.

Psychologists, sociologists, and educators who are concerned with human beings and their emotional mind-set, know how a stimulating activating environment is a prerequisite for the personal well-being and the evolution of mankind.

Material objectifications are an integral part of our everyday experience, as we are surrounded by space. Buildings, infrastructures, pictorial and graphic elements guiding us, our moods and our perception of the atmosphere, for instance in stadiums and churches. People visit historic buildings, the shopping mall or museums, fighting for the reconstruction or demolition of train stations, castles and old towns. But nevertheless, buildings have been rarely explicitly made a subject to sociological consideration. In addition to that, there is still a lack of theoretical basic researches, which would allow to choose in-between different sociological perspectives on architecture.

So it is and remains a paradox: architecture is the inescapable, ever-present, non-repulsive, enduring and oversized form of society. In addition, architecture in particular, is as well-known as it is contentious for its claim to bring about a "new life" and to change society as a whole.

²¹ Rudolf Heinrich Zille (10 January 1858 – 9 August 1929) was a German illustrator and photographer.

Despite the actual explosiveness and ubiquity of architecture in an artificial, urban society, sociology has not yet systematically turned to architecture.

Slowly but steady, with the social significance of architecture, an explicit architectural sociology is currently emerging. This is less about teaching architecture than about its social relevance: the relationship between architecture and society. Above all, it is the space, the dwelling itself that is of interest. And it requires a conceptual effort to understand what it needs for a human to dwell adequately. Architectural sociology cannot simply operate on the old concepts of sociology, insofar as in the version of the "actual" social, as interaction or communication, architecture is always comprehensible as the "expression" or "mirror" of society.

So, the cognitive interest of architectural sociology can be found in the relevance of the built environment for structuring social actions. The built environment, in this case, the space in which people dwell, including areas for private and shared purposes, is both a fundamental element of spatial orientation, in the respective social situation and in each case specifically differentiated for figurations. At the same time, the built environment is the most visible expression of social and cultural change.

Architectural sociology studies the relationships between the built environment and social actions, while taking also the technical, economic and political conditions into account. Class-specific and culture-specific spatial use patterns and architectural symbol systems are of particular importance. Up to the present, it is not possible to describe architectural sociology as an established discipline among the special sociologists, comparable to family sociology, work or occupational sociology. There have been, indeed, early beginnings of sociological thinking in the 19th century, but they have not led to continuity and the associated establishment of chairs, institutes and journals.

For this reason, there is still a big verity of subjects which remained to be investigated and it is moreover necessary, to take the outcome of architectural sociological studies into account during the process of projecting. To cover a small part of these unanswered questions, the aim of this paper is to clarify the hypothesis above, whether and how far interior-architecture influences the well-being of residents. This topic is analysed on the basis of East-Berlin's interior-architecture from 1961 to 1989 and moreover supported by self-performed empirical studies in cooperation with former dwellers of Plattenbau type WBS 70.

3.2 The principles of well-being in living

Well-being has already be defined by the Oxford English Dictionary as “the state of being comfortable, healthy, or happy.” However, it is important to realise that wellbeing is a much broader concept than moment-to-moment happiness. As it includes happiness on the one hand, it also includes other things, such as how satisfied people are with their life and how they live, their sense of purpose, and how in control they feel. With his in mind, the New Economics Foundation elaborate the definition and described well-being currently as the following:

"Wellbeing can be understood as how people feel and how they function, both on a personal and a social level and furthermore, how they evaluate their lives as a whole." (Measuring Well-being - New Economics Foundation, 2012, p. 6)

Most people would agree that well-being is something they strive towards and the subjective measure of people's wellbeing is deemed so important that it is included, alongside health and the economy, in measures of national well-being. There is hardly any universal approach to measure well-being in the first place, but searching for the right way to measure the well-being factor of living, is even more complex. For this specific approach, it is important to understand that people's view of their own well-being is balanced with indicators relating to their quality of life - such as health, physical activity and political or social interaction. Processing those information on the first place, is a necessary basis to classify the characteristics of participants attending the desired study. This method enables the interviewer to get the broadest possible perspective on someone's overall well-being and an idea of how well they manage their day to day life. Only then, it can be possible to differentiate the impact of architecture on social well-being from all the other cumulative well-being factors.

But to lead the focus directly to the area this study refers to: there are several reasons why this research corresponds specifically to interior-architecture. To start from the very beginning, the most private unit of a residential building will always be its interior space. Only the interiors of a dwelling provide people enough cosiness to be completely impartial and honestly themselves. A major part of the personal and social development takes place in interior space. This is the place where characters are born. Interior-architecture is, therefore, an incredibly important area, which is incisive in life and still needs a lot more researches, to be better understood.

Moreover, in the Basic Law of Germany, all citizens are awarded with the 'Inviolability of the dwelling' (Article 13 (1) GG) and furthermore with the right for a 'free development of personality' (Article 2 (1) GG). Living space and self-development are closely bonded. The living space allows

the separation between public and private space. By means of furnishings and the creation of a personal style, this distinction is underlined. "The personal space has always [...] been understood as an intimate retreat [...]. But interior-architecture in the true sense, exists as long as there are people in search of retreat, security and inner identity. "Furthermore, the private housing, unlike the exposed public objects, such as clothing or cars, is characterized by a low degree of social control. In addition to the primary need for protection, interior-architecture fulfils the need for status demonstration and helps to alleviate emotional deficits. The design of the personal living space creates identification and uniqueness, promotes order and orientation, intimacy and cosiness. Due to the emotional nature of all those needs, they are mostly considered private and personal.

Our home is a place where nothing new or unknown exists and exactly this knowledge, provides us a sense of security and contributes significantly to the feeling of well-being. But in addition to the basic need for privacy, there is also the contrary one for social contacts. Returning to the definition of a „good“dwelling, the hypothesis indicates that a well-designed apartment, must be able to offer both. (Pavalache-Ilie, 2015, p. 6)

However, it is also important that private areas are well separated from public ones – at least insofar that a retreat is always possible. If a domestic space does not provide those fundamental facilities, it may provoke far-reaching impacts on inhabitants, their moods and their developments - personal and referring to other dwellers as well. The wrong living environment can be a major burden that, along with other impacts, can surely lead to physical and/or mental health problems.

In addition to the basic living needs, there is also the need for the right stimulus level. Due to its evolutionary character, humans need a certain level of stimulation in order to function in the right way. To implement the real impact of stimuli onto the human mind, it is well-known how a total reduction of stimuli was already used as a method of torture. Being locked in a completely white, empty room without windows, without smell, without noises, attacks the psyche of humans massively. No matter which interior-architectural style society prefers, there are two principles that shape the living environment: safety and order. They should maintain a balance of order, but on the other hand of course, too much monotony and order seems drowsy.

Taking this information in account, society, as well as architecture, could benefit dramatically from measuring well-being, as it supports the evaluation of different architectural aspects and approaches. A measurement of satisfaction in context of living also supports the assessment of built architecture in general, as it may help architects to improve their services, in order to meet the dwellers needs. Regarding to that and regarding the empirical studies, it is important to analyse

the participants, by means of, what kind of people they are, how well they feel coping with everyday' s life and how hopeful and confident they are about to achieve their personal goals.

In order to gain this fundamental basis and accomplish a strong and justified evaluation of the following empirical studies, the next chapters incorporate research material, which illustrates a method of categorizing participants, in order to comprehend their characteristic qualities and natures. The approach is therefore supportive, as it assist with interacting adequately and considering personal characteristics while evaluating the empirical results.

3.3 The context between social well-being and interior-architecture

Germany's interior-architecture had the significance of facing the private and personal space, long before 1945. This personal space has always been perceived as introverted and sworn in, therefore it was ever understood as an intimate retreat realm. Interior-architecture in the true sense, existed as long as there were people in search of retreat, security and an inner identity. The interior of dwellings defines the second skin of humanity and therefore resumes the spatial representation of internal human needs. The continuing level, in this context, the primary need and status symbol of self-reflection, is motivated by emotional deficits. Most dwellers start, depending on possibilities and situations, with considerations of possible interior function and design improvements. The human being was ever searching for identification, unmistakability for orientation and order, for open spaces but intimacy – shortly, for coziness. By continuing this these, it should be clarified that and how interior-architecture is definitely relevant in cultural and sociological areas. From this follows the assumption, that a public or state-controlled interior-architecture, may influence the economy, the society and the overall well-being of every individual dweller.

However, interior architecture as an independent discipline is still relatively young. The need to separate it from architectural education did only become reality in 1970, but in spite of everything the social design potential of interior design is mostly covered in the public consciousness by its reduction to a sub item of architecture. From this follows that the field of interior architecture, at least in some cases, will only find a lower cultural acceptance than engineering based on architectural studies.

But shaping spatial concepts always kept generations and disappeared societies present while it revealed the subsystems of society as well. Interior-Architecture is not only visually experienced, but also physically. As it creates our everyday milieu, it does have expressivity and affectivity on everyone's daily life. Features, such as the available living space, the equipment of the apartment, the residential area and housing costs are influencing the subjective satisfaction. Additioning, those fundamental impacts, atmospherically conditions such as air quality, noise pollution and that extent of existing green spaces are further important parameters for the assessment of housing situations. Nowadays, housing associations increasingly address socio-economic problems by supporting customers into employment and activity, but low life expectancy persists. Addressing the true reasons, why tenants are satisfied or dissatisfied with their lives and living situation on the first

hand, accomplishes a long term result of pleased dwellers in their homes - living longer lives of well-being.

„The history of interior-architecture was always a social, cultural and private history of mankind. “ (Dr. Renate Kübler, 2013)

„While interior-architecture is the symbiosis of planning and designing interiors, with the aim of ensuring the physical, mental and social well-being of the people inside their rooms, this idea only works interactively connected to the image of society - and this image is subject of constant change (...)“ (Peter Cernov, President of the Federation of Austrian Interior Designers).

Driven by the same intentions, the Plattenbau series were meant to become a synonym for comfortable living in the former DDR. However, after the collapse of the political system and the followed unification in 1990, the "equality dwellings" were rapidly losing their status and attractiveness. Demands for large-scale demolition are a consequence of vacant apartments. The principle of the DDR, in this case, to overproduce industrialized, cheaper buildings, has become obsolete. Nowadays, the deep desire for individual design of living spaces dominates the housing market. Plattenbau-typologies are still associated with monotony, a lack of infrastructure and poor quality of their living environment. But are those accusations justified and what was the specific reasons for the massive construction of large residential areas in the DDR? What did the architectural implementation of the ideological specifications look like - and why did the living preferences change so drastically after the fall of the Wall?

In order to understand the housing and construction methods of the former DDR, it is fundamental to remember certain organizational structures and backgrounds. The quantitative and qualitative dimensions of DDR housing were not a coincidence, but politically-ideologically justified and moreover used as an expression of a clearly socio-political objective.

The tended aim was to create an all centralized housing typology for the whole DDR society - the brutal transformation of a capitalist heritage into a "developed socialist society", which should become manifested in a "socialist way of life". During this period of time, society adopted a new industrial face. Within this evolution, new ideas about the questions of housing came up as well. Due to the rapid industrialization, unfavourable, to the point of unacceptable, housing situations and living conditions were created for the majority of the population.

Housing reformers and movements tried to draw attention to those abuses, but were not able to arrange anything significant, as the regime restricted all public representation of problems. This situation was therefore unacceptable, as the housing condition did not only affect the act of dwelling, but moreover - as mentioned above - the full process of personal development and up growth. Stating the fact that dwellings and residential locations are of significant importance for the formation, presentation and consolidation of lifestyles, aggravates the former living situation even further. Nonetheless, we are able to predicate, that the housing and living environment is an essential factor for the development of the individual being.

Considering the official declaration of The United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights about housing, additionally confirms the above statement. The characteristics of the “Right to Adequate Housing”²² are clarified in the Committee’s general comments. The declaration here fore states: (...) in the Basic Laws of Housing, everyone is awarded with the 'Inviolability of the dwelling' (Article 1 3(1) GG) and the right to 'free development of his personality' (Article 2 (1) GG). Living space and self-development are closely related. (United Nations, November 2009, pp. 3-6)

Analysis of population-representative groups have shown that, based on their lifestyle typologies, very specific living conditions, housing needs and also patterns of behaviour in the housing market could be identified. A connection between living and lifestyle arises generally from the fact that the cultural and aesthetic meaning of living has increased over time. Aesthetics started to serve as a means of self-expression and representation of the inhabitants. Different living styles are nowadays required as communication tools. Household and family-forms are decisive for the needed size of living space and therefore also for the level of satisfaction, while a social mix of shifts and lifestyles prevents the desolation and stigmatization of residential areas. In any case, the diversity of housing normally requires a variety of flexible floor plans and a wide range of infrastructures in the neighbourhoods, to please the needs of all individuals. Analysis results have shown that specific measures need to be adapted to each different lifestyle, in any other case, the quality of life of each individual group will never be able to increase. Lifestyles must therefore definitely be taken into account in order to build more thoughtful for the future.

²² The right to adequate housing is a human right recognized in international human rights law as part of the right to an adequate standard of living.

3.4 Specific social-studies on East-German habitation

Most scientific reviews of Germany's DDR period, are very limited to social and economic change processes, while the changes of interior-architecture in the new federal states were hardly noticed as a researchable subject. The following chapters are going to present empirical researches on the satisfaction of dwellers, who resided in East-Berlin during former DDR times. Since the following studies, segregated the satisfaction and well-being of former residents in prefabricated buildings, but not the relevant architectural justification in that context, these current chapters will be followed by additional empirical studies regarding this thematic, in order to get a qualified illustration of the former living situation. By means of this approach, a basis, to answer the question of relevance of interior-architecture for the well-being of former residents, will be formed.

The concept of the "socialist way of life" shaped urban and socio-sociological researches until the end of the DDR as a substitute for theory. In the 1980s, in specialist groups, such as the Bauakademie²³, the insight grew, as the dominance of prefabricated building had led to an almost irreversible narrowing of possibilities for action. In the sociological discussion, more attention was drawn to this issue as well: "The principal client, who submits to the local council, on a legal basis, is often unilaterally acting as a lobbyist of the construction and construction industries due to the current assignment to the organs of construction in many places. Through this assignment, the decision-making process remains focused on the criteria of effectiveness of the construction industry." (Staufenbiel, 1989, p. 187) Compared to a "location-neutral offer of buildings, with the most uniform technology that was possible", Staufenbiel reclaims "they created a building production that meets the requirements of urban development". As a sociologist, he could not avoid legitimizing this socio-scientific expertise "with high economic effects".

Lothar Kühne²⁴ on the other hand, a representative of the so-called "Berlin aesthetics" during the DDR, stated how he feared the consecutive monotony in Berlin's architectural appearance would increase the urge for individualized objectivity inside the dwelling - which will be confirmed by sociological studies in subsequent chapters of this work.

²³ The Bauakademie (Building Academy) in Berlin, Germany, was a higher education school for art of building to train master builders. It originated from the construction department of the Academy of Fine Arts and Mechanical Sciences (from 1704).

²⁴ Lothar Kühne (born September 10, 1931 in Bockwitz, † November 7, 1985 in Berlin) was a German Marxist cultural philosopher, architectural theorist and university professor.

In contrast to conventional art centrism, it regarded the industrially produced object as well as the socially objectified spatial relationships of humans as its preferred research subject. He pleaded for functionalism - the absolute primacy of human needs in architecture - against eclectic historicism and against the architectural currents of postmodernism that dominated the West. He turned against the stylization of practical objects to works of art, as has inspired since the time of Marcel Duchamp contemporary art and the fundamental debate on the concept of art.

Kuehne himself doubted the emancipatory hopes, while indicating that those apartments were not sufficient for the people in context of living satisfaction: the aesthetic effect of serial figurativeness requires a completely transformed sense of space and refuses traditional organizational forms of space. The design of individual space, requires a developed aesthetic sensibility and a well-developed ability to shape. As well as Olaf Weber²⁵ formulated in his essay "Functionalism as a DDR Utopia", Lothar Kühne maintained his thesis that (...) "functionalism is the aesthetic forming principle of socialism." (Weber, 2012, p. 69)

In the following chapters, three empirical research studies, investigated from architects as well as sociologists, will be examined in context to the leading thesis. This approach is going to form a consolidated basis out of present research material.

²⁵ Professor Olaf Weber, born in 1943, former Professor for aesthetics in art and architecture at Bauhaus-University in Weimar.

3.4.1 Plattenbau, as an area of conflict

Doctor Patrick Richter, still operating Professor at the faculty of Hamburg, Germany, obtained his final degree by means of philosophical and historical studies on the architectural and political transformation of industrially constructed residential houses, built during the DDR. During the course of his researches, he achieved considerable details about the state of satisfaction of former dwellers, especially regarding the ones, who lived in WBS 70 series.

Nowadays, in the eastern part of Berlin, every *second* household dwells in an industrially constructed apartment, which was built during the former DDR - in several East-German cities, especially in former industrial centres, prefabricated buildings dominate the housing stock significantly. (Richter, 2006, p. 6)



Figure 14: Prefabricated housing estate, located in the district of Marzahn-Hellersdorf, Berlin, 2010

The renovation, reconstruction and, last but not least, the demolition of Plattenbau buildings has been an essential area of public funding since the beginning of the 90s. This is one of the most visible legacies of the former DDR and insofar a particularly problematic legacy of the whole German state, as those Plattenbau Typologies could and can still be read as a structural and aesthetic representation of the former socialist system. The proximity to the object and its still ongoing status was a permanent problem, awaiting, but avoided to be solved. The record stock of the DDR has never been comprehensively documented, but it was always considered as part and expression of the system, which had, according to population and the Government, to be overcome as quickly as possible.

Richter pointed out, in which ways the Plattenbau building and its preforms, have been harshly politicized by state and society. The result was the still effective connotation of prefabricated buildings, by attributing them to be "socialist". His researches are therefore relevant, as he also stated the dissatisfaction of East-German dwellers, regarding their living environment. According to his study, this indisposition, improved over the years²⁶, but lasted even longer than the DDR itself.

²⁶ See Figure

Society blamed the Plattenbau as a reflection of deficits, caused by the DDR socialism and even worse, as the materialized reason for its failure. As a result of the system change, after the end of the DDR, the Plattenbau constructions became highly stigmatized. This stigmatisation qualified the Plattenbau-Typology as a venue for a whole generational conflict. At the same time, aesthetical and political effected architecture slid into a completely dialectical relationship.

As the (desired) alignment of classes was essentially defined by the alignment of living conditions, the DDR created a socio-political standardization pressure, which appeared to become more important than balanced design. This pressure was propagandistically described and varnished as the following: "There is no socially conditioned priority for any party. Everyone lives in the same apartments under the same conditions: the general manager resides in the same house as the servant, the mayor in the same block, next to the shift attendant from the heat supply centre and the city builder who planned the city. "

For instance, the Typology-Series WBS 70 (Stallknecht) was the tragically reversed attempt to avoid monotony. Almost half of all DDR Plattenbau buildings (42%), were built from this typology. The WBS 70, which was introduced in 1970, was designed to enable differentiated building shapes and layout variants as well as varied, variable and adaptable urban planning solutions. But the socialist lifestyle did not develop as expected, so for instance, families would rather eat their meals at home than in collective large restaurants and kitchen/living spaces were not sufficiently prepared for this kind of lifestyle. Furthermore the kitchens were now connected to the living rooms with a hatch anymore. (Richter, 2006, p. 50)

Also the cityscape suffered from the budget constraints. The economic and quantitative pressure, the variability of the modular system of the WBS 70 had to freeze and deteriorate almost automatically. The element assortment was large in theory, but in practice, variations should be as small as possible, for reasons of efficiency. Former facades, which were often tiled or decorated in the 60s, became greyer and rougher over the years. For long periods of time, rough mud, wilderness and deserted construction sites formed the picture between the finished houses. Urban design accents were only set in exceptional cases. For economic reasons, the height of the WBS 70 blocks was restrained to six storeys, as this was the maximum number of storeys at which no elevators had to be installed due to the specifically changed building law. In addition to that, the area of an average apartment was relatively small with 62m², compared to West-German apartments with an average size of 69.5m². In the DDR, each individual dweller inhabited an area of 27.4m², while at the same time, West-German dwellers lived in about 36.8m². On one hand, a limited individual space created a strong intimacy of relationships among family members in East-Berlin, as there

was hardly any room for personal development. But similarly, as said, there was hardly any room for individuality, which had major effects on dweller's personal development. In addition to that, referring to the WBS 70 series, the dark inner bathroom cells and kitchens were often too narrow and also without windows. In most apartments there were no storage rooms built, nor planned. Hallways were either small or long and narrow and therefore hardly usable for any interaction. In the end, as promising as the WBS 70 was meant to be, the variability of the WBS 70 modular system had to freeze and deteriorate under this economical and quantitatively pressure in the end.

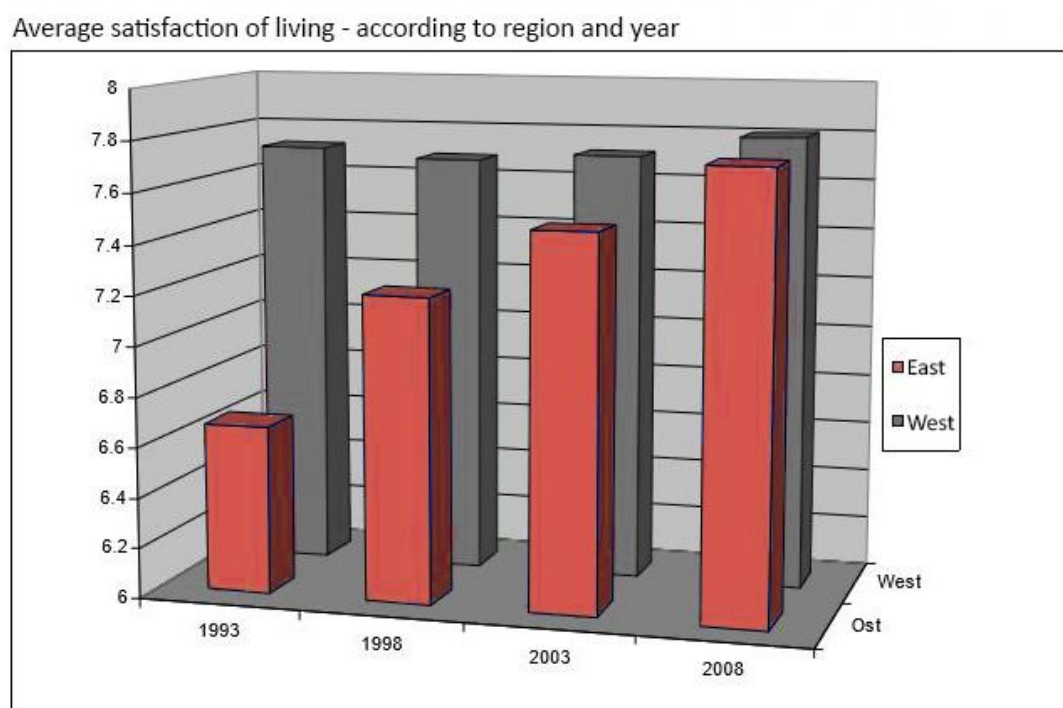


Figure 15: Table illustrating the average satisfaction of living – comparing East- and West-German dwellers

Richter continued his social studies until the year 2008, since one of his ambitious goals was also to figure, how the German living satisfaction in relation to former housing changed, or better, improved. According to his studies, he could state that the satisfaction of the West-German population hardly changed, as West-German dwellers were already quite satisfied, without any striking amplitude, referring to the period directly after the fall of the Berlin Wall.

On the contrary, seeing the East-German inhabitants, the housing satisfaction was far below the average level, right after the reunification of Berlin. This low level of satisfaction increased more and more over the years, according to Richter. In any event, the crucial factor to this paper, however, is the fact that there is already a confirmed dissatisfaction, with respect to the living comfort in former East-Germany.

3.4.2 Lifestyles, Housing Needs and Mobility

Prof. Dr. Anette Spellerberg²⁷ has been Professor of Urban Sociology at the Technical University of Kaiserslautern since 2008. She is still teaching and researching in the field of urban sociology at the Technical University of Kaiserslautern. Her studies are mainly concerned about urban and regional sociology, analysis of social structures and researches about lifestyles and neighbourhoods.

With her publication, „Lifestyles, Housing Needs and Mobility“ in 1997, the author recorded an application-example of her previous lifestyle researches. Moreover, Spellerberg presented the first comparative study on living orientations of different lifestyle groups in Germany. Living arrangements and discrepancies between conditions and housing needs are examined in different ways according to the dweller's lifestyles. Her lifestyle-term refers to visible behaviours and action-guiding attitudes. Hereby, Spellerberg was able to determine nine different life-style groups for East-German inhabitants during DDR times.²⁸

The author proved, how the incorporation of leisure activities and orientations, makes a significant contribution to the explanation of housing mobility. In addition, housing and living environment are essential factors for the development of personality and the development of lifestyles. There are relevant relationships between typical lifestyles, housing needs and mobility. Discrepancies between the desired life and the actual living situation lead to dissatisfaction and have a major effect on dweller's mobility readiness.

Spellerberg, moreover, stated how well-being tendencies can be grasped and explained by means of lifestyle criteria and categories of social class or family orientation.

Her project was carried out as a cooperation project between her, the Free University of Berlin and the Social Science Research Centre Berlin from March 1995 to June 1998. It relies primarily on a representative population survey of about 3,000 respondents.

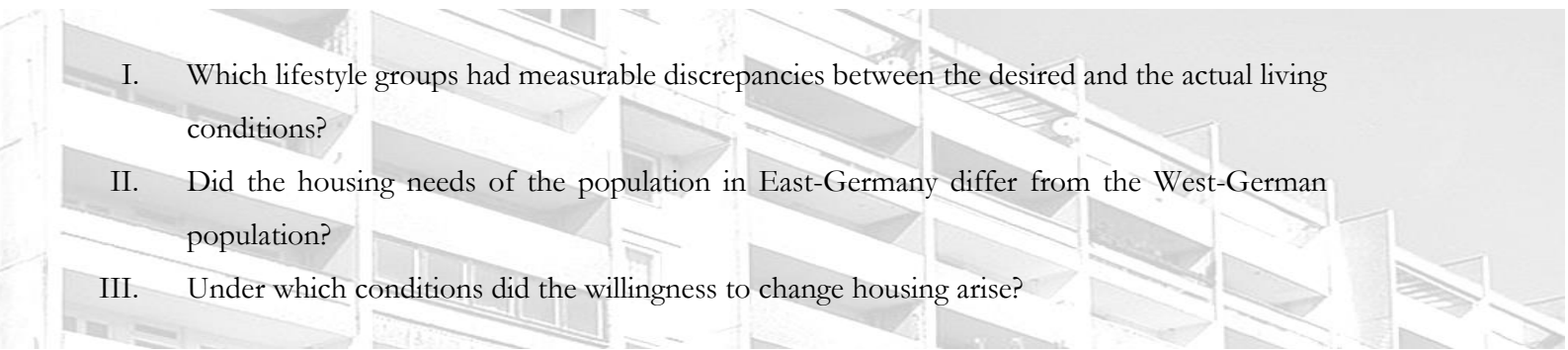
The author assumed that, in return, dwellings and residential locations are also of significant importance for the formation, presentation and consolidation of mentioned above lifestyles. In addition, housing and living environment are essential factors for the development of the

²⁷ Prof. Dr. Anette Spellerberg, member in the German Sociological Association (GSA), member in the German Academy for Urban Planning and Regional Planning and composer of several research studies concerning the perception of well-being in context of living and housing.

²⁸ See Annex 2-3, a brief description of the lifestyle groups, identified in the 1993, welfare survey in western and eastern Germany

individual being. Schneider wanted to know, to which extent, certain homes, neighbourhoods and places develop or repel special styles of living.

The analyses of her population-representative groups have shown that, based on their lifestyle typologies, very specific living conditions, housing needs and also patterns of behaviour in the housing market could be identified, special attention was dedicated to the following questions:

- 
- I. Which lifestyle groups had measurable discrepancies between the desired and the actual living conditions?
 - II. Did the housing needs of the population in East-Germany differ from the West-German population?
 - III. Under which conditions did the willingness to change housing arise?

Her population-representative study centred life-style groups in East- and partly West- Germany, as well as the extent of (dissatisfied) housing needs in terms of residential location, housing, equipment and mobility readiness. Nowadays, the different styles of living also serve a way of self-expression and communication with other people, as lifestyles do not only include marital status and household size, but valuable additional information from everyday life. By end of the 90s, apartments are still predominantly designed and built according to the model of "family-friendly" living. The housing needs of the population changed, especially households became smaller compared to the ones of the past. Single-person households of all ages, and in particular single elderly people, have increased significantly, whereas in return there were fewer and fewer families with children.

Starting with the survey about the living conditions in both parts of Germany, West-German buildings and apartments held a relatively representative function, while the DDR on the contrary maintained the model of "modern", functional, effective and affordable housing. The prefabricated buildings in Berlin were comparatively well rated, in context of social life and a well-mixed audience of tenants. The narrowness of the apartments, on the other hand, especially when children were included in households, was complained massively. The monotony of the residential area and the lack of infrastructure came additionally along. In addition to the outcome of different lifestyles, the study also highlighted the various problems regarding well-being in living. As seen in the following tables, especially the inhabitants of East-Germany suffered from unsatisfactory floor

plans and heating systems. However, in return, the same residents benefited from low rental rates and a well-developed social cohesion among their neighbourhoods.

On the basis of the mentioned above, nine typical lifestyle groups, the author examined the actual and desired living conditions in both parts of the country. The diverse information about housing were apportioned through her study. For each lifestyle group, typical needs and patterns of mobility, and thus satisfaction, emerged, whereby, according to Schneider, a connection between living and lifestyles generally results from the fact that the cultural and aesthetic importance of living has increased.

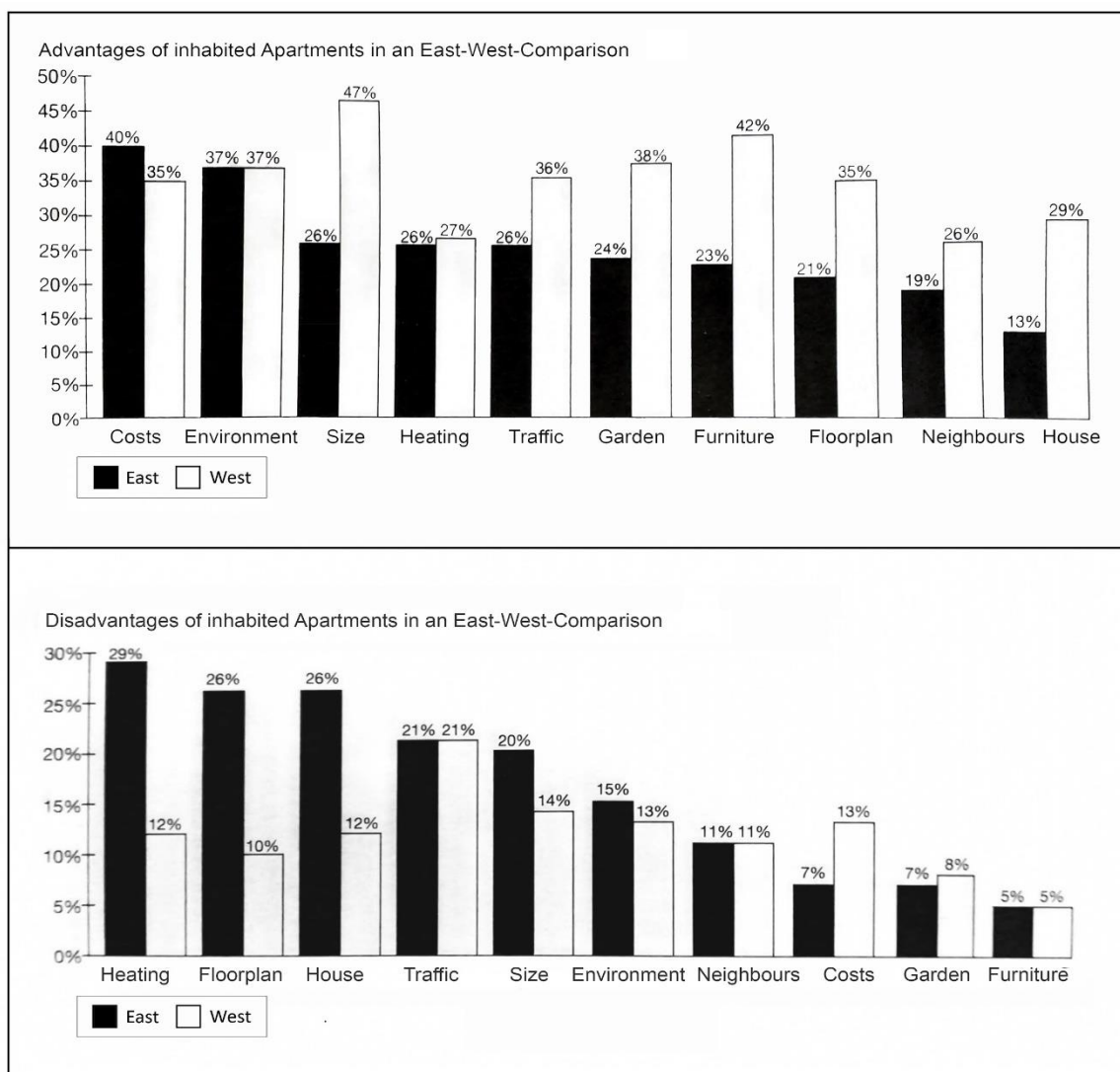


Figure 16: Advantages and disadvantages of former apartments in East- and West-Berlin

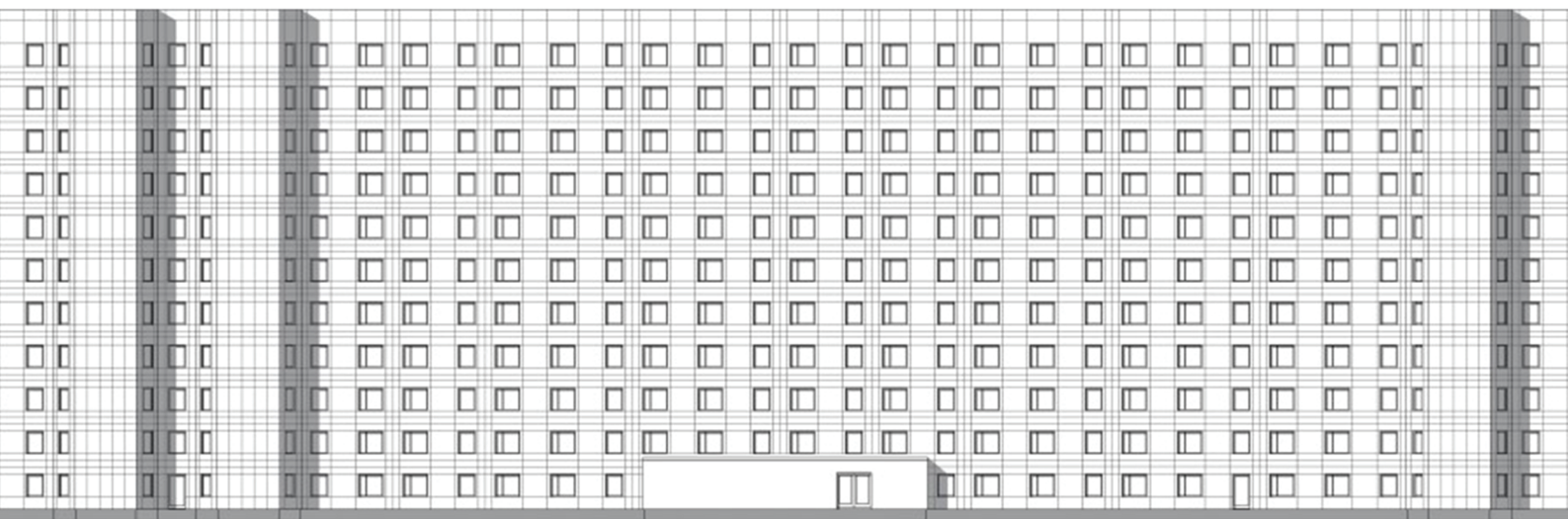
Looking at the final outcome, the author stated that in both parts of the country, domestic lifestyle types predominated, as did those with a preference for modern entertainment. A connection between living and lifestyle does generally arise from the fact that the cultural and aesthetic meaning of living has increased over time. Aesthetics started to serve in means of self-expression and representation of the inhabitants. Different living styles are nowadays required as communication tools. The household and family forms are decisive for the needed size of living space and therefore also for the level of satisfaction.

The study concluded that the achieved lifestyle concept can be used to identify new and differently differentiated demand groups in the housing market in a better way. Spellerberg was able to attach statements to each of the nine lifestyle groups, according to their housing preferences and their willingness to move. Her study provides valuable data for those, responsible in municipal planning, architects and property developers as well as scientists in regional and social research.

A social mix of shifts and lifestyles prevents the desolation and stigmatization of residential areas. In any case, the diversity of housing requires more flexible floor plans and a wide range of infrastructures in the neighbourhoods. The analyses results have shown that specific measures need to be adapted to each different lifestyle, otherwise, the quality of life of each individual group will never increase. Lifestyles should therefore always be taken into account in order to build more thoughtful for the future.

“functionalism is the aesthetic forming principle of socialism”

Olaf Weber, Professor for aesthetics and architecture at Bauhaus-University



S. Figure 6: Elevation-Drawing of the WBS 70 -Series

3.4.3 Alphons Silberman

Alphons Silberman, who died on 4th of March 2000, in the age of 91, was a German sociologist and publicist. The Jewish citizen of Cologne, studied lawyer, started his empirical researches early impressed by Max Weber²⁹ and Emile Durkheim³⁰. He was awarded in September, 1995, with the Order of Merit of his state, due to his meaningful studies regarding the social sectors. Silberman studied niche-thematics, which no one had previously adopted before. He has always been courageous and spoke openly about social problems, even during the Third Reich and nevertheless he was Jewish.



Figure 17: Alphons Silberman, around 1987

Most scientific reviews of Germany's reunification are still very limited to social and economic change processes, at the same time the changes of interior architecture in the new federal states were hardly noticed as a researchable subject. However, the social-scientist Alphons Silberman (1909 - 2000) started investigating housing preferences of the West-German population in 1963, after the borders were opened in 1989, he continued his investigations in the new federal states.

The starting point of Silberman's present research was the recognition to approach the subject of "living" from six different angles. First of all, living itself can be considered as an individual issue. Living and the, therewith associated design of the apartment, differ from each other, depending on the dweller. The house of an employee, a scholar, a worker or an artist will, in the aspired way, always look differently. Secondly, living is a psychological issue. The architecture of dwellings should be able to prevent disruptive factors as for instance, noise pollution or claustrophobically conditions. Thirdly, without establishing any ranking, Silberman sees living as a psychological matter, where comfort, ease, coziness and sanitary are the ingredients. The criteria of this kind are closely connected to the range of technical innovations, in this context, we can also speak of living as a technological matter. Fourth, living presents itself as a social matter, with the focus primarily on the social-individual, which is, the prestige of mankind. After all, it is a long recognized fact by

²⁹ Maximilian Karl Emil Weber (21 April 1864 - 14 June 1920) was a German sociologist, philosopher, jurist, and political economist. His ideas profoundly influenced social theory and social research. Weber is often cited, with Émile Durkheim and Karl Marx, as among the three founders of sociology.

³⁰ David Émile Durkheim (April 15 1858 - Nov. 15 1917) was a French sociologist. He formally established the academic discipline and - with Karl Marx and Max Weber - is commonly cited as the principal architect of modern social science.

sociological research that humanity in general will always be tempted to maintain or improve its social status. This explains the striving of entire population-groups for a "better living", beautiful rooms, big room sizes and great housing distributions. Fifth, he arrives to state "living" as a socio-cultural affair. Cultural science has long recognized and repeatedly stated that taste is not disputed or fulfilled ex cathedra by artists, draftsmen, designers, architects or urban planners, that one either possesses or does not. Taste is a social process that is formed by social forces, such as social change and, last but not least, individual creativity. At last, he ended his approach with "living", in terms of a sociological matter. From the perspective of Silbermann, living can be neither a storybook, a dream nor a myth, but only a true and honest social process. This refers to dweller's behaviors, as they happen every day in front of every one of us. So one essential question needs to be asked: "Why do people live the way they live and with what effect?" Through the knowledge of the "wherefore," Silbermann tried to penetrate the mutual relations of all determinants, which have been systematically outlined as the six matters of living. (Silbermann, 1995 , pp. 22-23)

Silbermann's results were based on a standardized, oral interview surveys of the East-German population at the age of twenty years and upwards. The survey covered the entire territory of East-Berlin and the regional distribution of the interviews corresponded to the distribution of the population living in the Plattenbau series "WBS 70".

As already addressed above, the DDR housing supply, which started as a positively considered phenomenon, turned out to embody several weaknesses, while closer inspected. The institute of German economy took not only the qualitative construction methods in account, but also the shortage of socio-scientific information retrieval. It says: "For both reasons, the forced and sped up building policy was obviously not in a position to meet the wishes of DDR citizens on an adequate level." Seeing the incomplete and inaccurate former data, it was necessary to record the residential experience and housing conditions in the former DDR more closely.

Silbermann used the term "living quality" in relation to the individual, i.e. the individual resident, as in this context, factual indicators only make sense in connection with personal valuations. Therefore, he calculated the average quality of living by means of satisfaction criteria. To conclude Silbermann's evaluations, the studies identified an above-average proportion of dissatisfied dwellers in new buildings, which means in this case, WBS 70 buildings. This can be traced back to several more or less well-researched reasons, but as already said, Silbermann was not an architect and did not explore the apartments and floor plans sufficiently. (Silbermann, 1995 , pp. 39-42)

However, he realized that an urgent and continuous problem was the distribution of space. For instance, a family of five was forced to live in a rented apartment that consisted of a kitchen, a

hallway, a bathroom, a living room, and a maximum of three separate rooms, which would probably be used as a parent's room and the other two as nurseries. This means, first of all, not even every person had their own private space, and secondly, there aren't any room resources available for other activities.

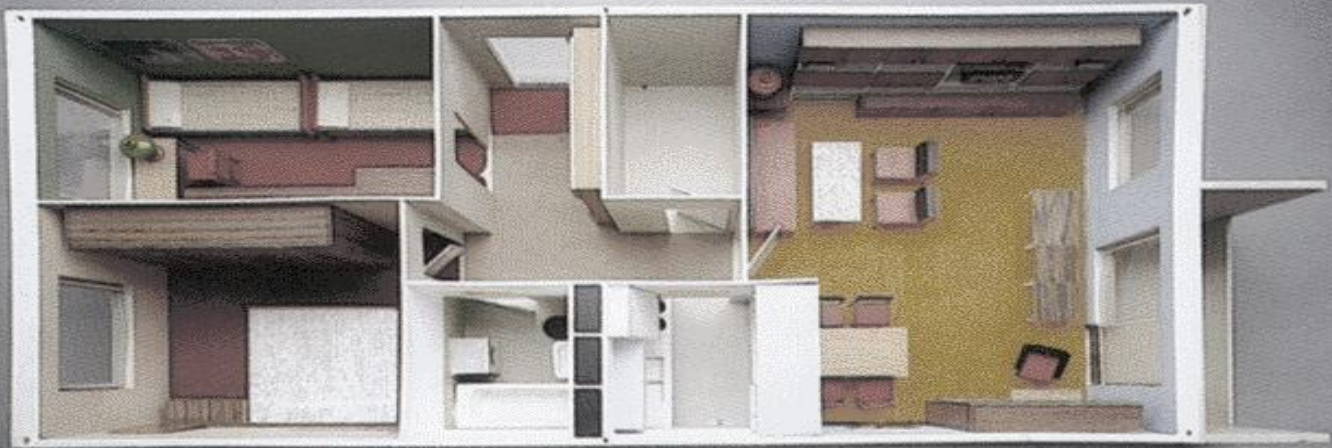


Figure 18: Carton-model of a residential block, of the housing series WBS 70

Another important aspect for dissatisfaction was the decentralized heating system. The major problem about prefabricated apartments with district heating was, that nobody was able to regulate the temperature inside their apartment. This generated not only comfort-related but also economic and ecological disadvantages. For instance, in winter terms, when there was a brief warming period, many residents opened the windows for too long to regulate the temperature on their own, which of course succeeded, but is an incredible waste of energy. Silbermann summarized, the cheap construction of district heating increased the cost in the long run.

To evaluate the characteristics of living, Silbermann analyzed the living areas according to their highest usage and personal importance to the residents. When evaluating these results, it should be considered, as already shown, that East-German inhabitants had generally less available space than West-Germans. Residents in East-Germany, were there for more dependent on identifying with the living room because of their lack of personal space.

The overall result showed that the living experience is generally strongly focused on the living room. However, if, for instance, an eight-person household concentrates its living experience on one room (here the living room), this place should be largely multifunctional to please everyone's ideals. Due to the high level of dissatisfaction, we can assume that this was not the case.

Moreover, Silbermann used two different indicators to determine the dweller's satisfaction with their apartment. On the one hand, he asked for the satisfaction with furnishings and on the other

hand the satisfaction with the floor plans. In summary, the following values could be charted: 14% of the respondents were dissatisfied about the furnishing of their apartment and 35% of the respondents were dissatisfied about the floor plans. Since furnishings of dwellings are far more variable by their inhabitants than floor plans are, it is not surprising that for both parts of Germany the percentage of dissatisfied respondents was far higher considering their floor plan layouts. (Compared to West-Germany, at least twice as many people were dissatisfied in both cases.)

Additional to that, the graphic summarized more information, namely that women were more dissatisfied with their homes than men, younger tenants were more often dissatisfied than older tenants and the higher the number of tenants sharing a household, the higher the measurable dissatisfaction.

Asking what inhabitants would like to change, people answered the following: Most participants would like to change their sanitary facilities, especially the lighting conditions largely disturbed them. As already written, another massive issue appeared due to the unregulated heating. The layout of the rooms was addressed as well, regarding the lack of space.

According to Silbermann, an area of housing includes individual, psychological and physiological, technological, social, socio-cultural and sociological aspects. All these aspects together build the social element "living experience". For this purpose, the human being, alone or in a group, is placed in the center of the consideration of living.

Summarized, it can be deduced, that especially the cheap construction methods led to considerable issues, the lack of maintenance and dissatisfaction. However, it should be added, how the political circumstances were of course the determining factor for the prefabricated buildings to be built in such a cheap and material-saving way. But nevertheless, were all those variables already well-known and taken into account during the design-phase – yet, apparently, no long-term satisfactory solution could be found.

4 'Plattenbau'-Typologies originated by Wilfried Stallknecht

4.1 Willfred Stallknecht – Sculpting the DDR-Landscape

The versatile Berlin-based architect Wilfried Stallknecht, who was born in 1928, played a key role in the development of the well-known WBS 70 Plattenbau series. In addition to that, Stallknecht worked as a city planner, among other things, in the redesign of the historic city centre of Bernau as a "socialist model city" (1972-84) as well as interior and furniture-designer. There are mainly two reasons that made Stallknecht's

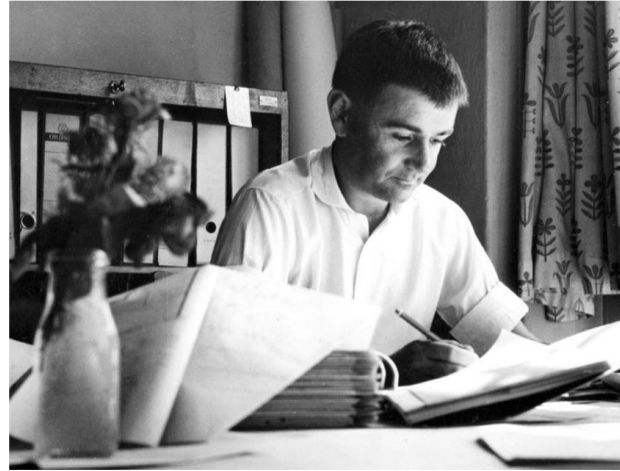


Figure 19: Wilfried Stallknecht during work, in the late 1960s

life and work, as a DDR architect, an exciting piece of German planning history. On the one hand, Stallknecht, worked for decades for the DDR's Bauakademie. He became a prominent figure in the area of building industry and by designing both construction series, the P2 Plattenbau series and WBS 70 Plattenbau-series, he raised himself into DDR building history.

On the other hand, Stallknecht went through a particularly interesting professional development from being a carpenter, to becoming an architect (which incidentally, had a striking parallel to the second famous architect of the DDR, Hermann Henselmann). Seeing all activities, that Stallknecht ever carried out throughout his professional life, from architecture and city planning to interior-architecture and even furniture design, a versatility is unified that hardly any other architect of the former DDR could look back on.

His life story, which ranged from the Weimar Republic, through the Nazi era, the Soviet occupation zone and the DDR, to the present days of a united Germany, exemplarily reflects the breaches of the 20th century as an "age of extremes". Stallknecht's work can be considered representative of a profession that experienced a double devaluation in the past, firstly by the tendency degradation architects to "complex projectors" during DDR times and after 1989 by the reduction and denunciation of the DDR as a state of record.

He lived until the age of 85, in relatively good health, in Berlin. With an alert mind and a lot of patience, he was ready for dozens of interviews and handed extensive written material from his personal archive, as a source for the scientific collections of the architectural faculty.

In 1959, at the age of 31, Stallknecht started to work for the building academy of the DDR. He was scheduled to work there for the next 25 years until his early retirement in 1985. The switchover to this central institution for research and development in all areas of DDR constructions opened up an entirely new career opportunity for Stallknecht. From this moment on, he was able to take part in important decisions, especially in the area of construction, starting in the 1960s and early 1970s. The rationalization of housing, in collaboration with industrial construction engineers, marked the central challenge for the East-German construction industry, at the end of the 50s, when Stallknecht started his widest-reaching project.

The aim was to modernize building technology with brick and block construction, which was still heavily influenced by the DDR in the aftermath of the Second World War and which was moreover used in the prestigious Stalinallee project. The establishment and implementation of industrial construction in the DDR was accompanied by normative determinations by the institutional system of construction. The decisive decisions in the establishment of industrial construction and the thereby effective institutional background, will be briefly outlined in the following chapter.

As it was and is still common in socialist systems of the Soviet style with "democratic centralism", decisions for the construction industry were determined, first and foremost, by the party. The SED followed the model of the Soviet Union, with the construction industry having chosen this paradigm shift as a field of practice and establishing a course of industrial construction. In 1955, SED chief Walter Ulbricht, announced at a construction conference the decision to enforce industrial construction.

Only a significantly more efficient housing system (on an industrialized basis) could offer the prospect of providing the whole DDR population with the huge amount of new buildings they were aiming for. Already in the early 50s, in Berlin-Johannisthal, the first experimental prefabricated buildings were built. The first generation of Plattenbau housing construction series started with the "P1"



Figure 21: P2, Elevation

building - developed under the responsibility of Richard Paulick, in 1958. The subsequent Plattenbau series "P2", developed by Stallknecht in the beginning of the 60s, continued with the same style as its forerunner, the "P1".

"P2" is an abbreviation for another Plattenbau housing-series of the former DDR. The P stands for parallel, as the load-bearing walls were arranged parallel to the facade surfaces. The "2" refers to the arrangement of two staircases included in the building. A

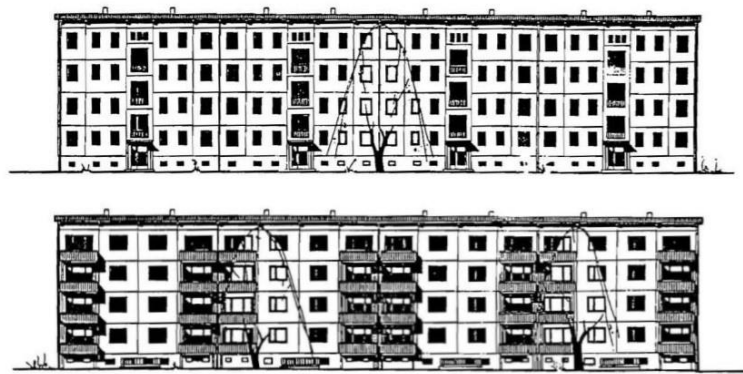


Figure 20: P1, Elevation front and back

number behind the slash, for instance P2/10, indicates the number of floors. This industrial design allowed rapidly constructed apartment blocks. It was used from 1961 until the end of the DDR. The first big change took place when Stallknecht launched the 3rd generation of prefabricated buildings with the housing construction series WBS 70, in the end of the 60s. The WBS 70 Plattenbau-Typology was built until the end of the DDR in 1990 and characterized by its use for several hundred thousand apartments.

4.2 W. Stallknecht reinventing Plattenbau

In the following compilation, the most important facts about the history of the creation of WBS 70, will be briefly summarized. A total of 1.52 million dwellings were built by prefabricated construction in the DDR, consisting of about 900,000 within the housing construction series of the WBS 70 typology.

The first WBS 70 building, which was ready to be inhabited, was planned in Berlin's district Neubrandenburg. It was built in the east of the old town and became ready for occupancy in 1973. The building is still located in Koszaliner Straße 1 – 7 and has been listed as a historical monument since 1983, as the first of its kind. From 1973 onwards, a triumphal procession began: with its individual, clearly visible façade panels, the WBS 70 shaped urban landscapes of East-Germany, like no other building.



Figure 22: The first residential WBS 70 block ever built in Koszaliner Straße 1 – 7, Brandenburg

The Plattenbau typology WBS 70 dominated the construction industry of the DDR in the 70s and 80s. The starting point for the development of the new housing construction series was the study "Plattenbau 69", which Wilfried Stallknecht had worked on since 1968. But only after the new construction series met the recognition of professionals, it was officially taken from the Institute of Urban Design and Architecture in his sovereign custody and enforced as a new series.

The aim of the study "Plattenbau 69" was to work out a complex proposal on -how to develop panel construction in order to meet the increasing demands on living quality, urban planning, the cost of materials and in particular the effectiveness of production. Those aims should be reached by the help of a new panel construction series including a clearly restricted catalogue of elements, cost reductions and, thus, higher annual production figures for apartments.

In particular, it was criticized how the construction industry worked with too many components, what led to extremely high production costs. Not only did the P1 and P2 series differ significantly

from each other, but there were also regional variations within the series. After the introduction of the WBS 70, it was the only construction type that continued to be produced through the following years. The main purpose of the new series was to gather all those uneconomic production series, especially from the viewpoint of economists, into a new, more rational typology. In addition to that, Stallknecht intended to achieve the greatest possible variability of the new buildings. The outer walls of the building were constructed in three layers and received a core insulation. The WBS 70 series rested on a horizontal grid of 1.20 meters. The previously newly introduced hatch of the P2 - connection living room and dining area - was again partially repealed in favour of a stronger separation. The area of dining was placed back into the kitchen.



Figure 23: P2 living room, including the hatch, connecting living room and the kitchen area

The floor plan concept of the WBS 70 followed those investigations as well. Ginsburg, who was one of the cofounder of the Russian Constructivism, explained the credo of this design process in one of his many theoretical articles, "The Focus on a Goal in Modern Architecture", where he wrote the following: "Production or work processes usually combine with factories and works in our imagination, social and everyday processes with the society and the dwelling.

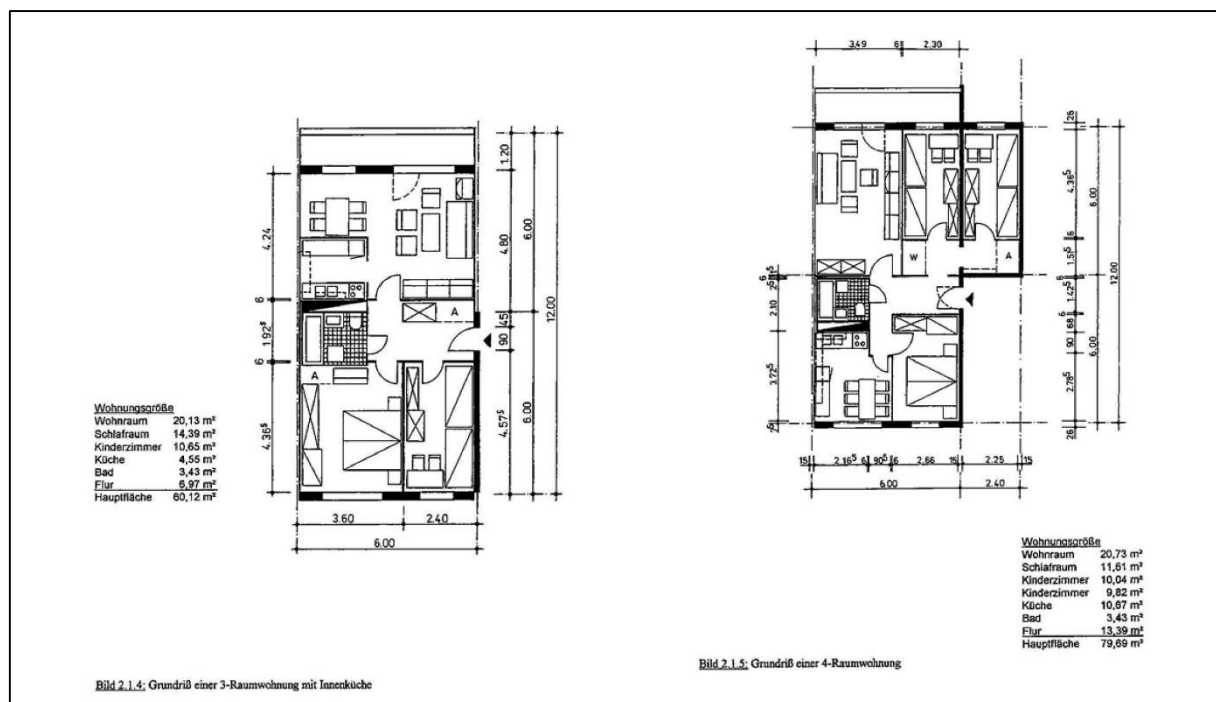


Figure 24: WBS 70, 3- & 4-Room Apartments; the 3-Room Apartment with interior-kitchen

In the socialist construction, of course, the everyday processes must be examined with the same care and attention as the production processes", (Ginsburg 1927, quoted after Chan-Magomedow 1983: 582).

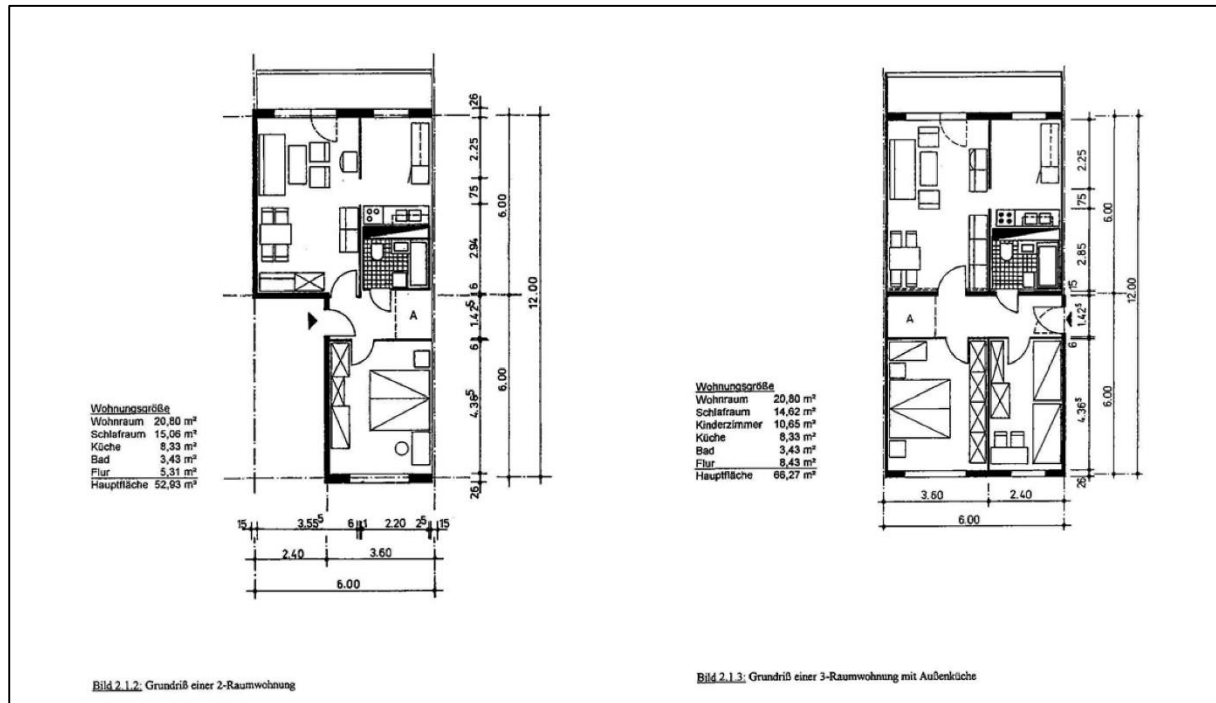


Figure 25: WBS 70, 2- & 3-Room Apartments; the 3-Room Apartment with exterior-kitchen

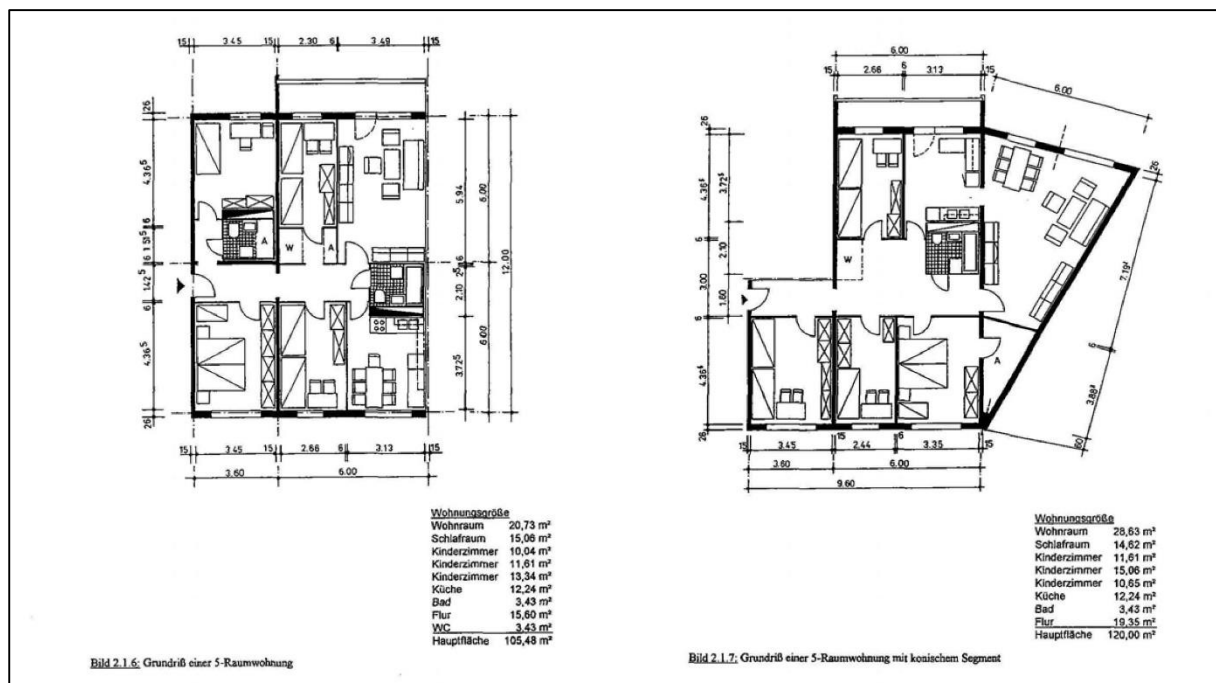


Figure 26: WBS 70, 5-Room Apartments; one including the corner-segment

For the first time within the prefabricated housing construction of the DDR, the WBS 70 series was used to construct larger apartments than usually - with a maximum of five possible rooms.

Based on the study by Stallknecht, the WBS 70 proved to be so economically that since 1972, by far the largest part of all

new constructions in the DDR could be realized. Of the approximately 1.52 million prefabricated apartment blocks built between 1973 and 1990, the type WBS 70 was by far the most widespread, with a spread of around 42 percent. Overall, it became

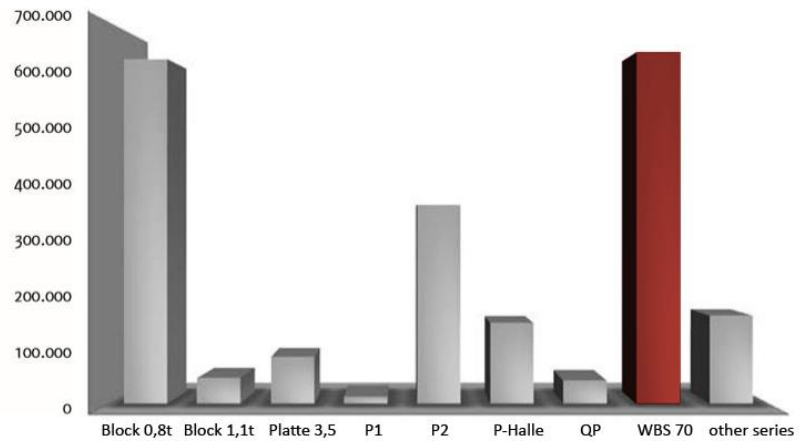


Figure 27: Number of constructed buildings in Berlin, sorted by different series

possible, especially with the standardized elements of a universally applicable range of industrially manufactured components, to provide the DDR population with more apartments in a shorter time than ever. This quantitative gain was, however, bought with losses in the quality of living and the aesthetic design of dwellings.

Keeping in mind that several concept ideas, design variants and development details were also introduced by other collective members, Achim Felz and Herbert Kuschy, whose contribution and work should by no means be denied, nevertheless Wilfried Stallknecht managed certainly the largest and most responsible part in the success of the project. This job was made possible for him in the first place by the well-equipped working conditions, which offered a central national research establishment like the building academy of the DDR.

If a representative painting about the former life in the DDR would be created today, its background would probably be determined by a large estate, constructed from one of those Plattenbau-Typologies. The DDR was and still is often announced - and often characterized - as the "land of panel construction".



Figure 28: WBS 70 with exterior staircase, original facade 2012, Berolinastraße, Berlin-Centre

The term "prefabricated buildings" or - the internationally more commonly used term - "large panel buildings", means generally those buildings, which are assembled from industrially prefabricated, floor-to-ceiling, wall-wide panels and the associated ceiling panels. They generally consisted out of concrete. For many observers, the "record" has become a cipher from the outside, a symbol of the architectural heritage of the DDR. Plattenbau still stands for two things: On one hand, it is still seen as synonym for the political and ideological goals of the state housing program of the SED. On the other hand, prefabricated buildings are above all, an element that strongly influenced the urban planning and architectural facade of the DDR, mainly because they dominate large parts of the urban landscape and even rural cultural landscapes in a visually dominant and ultimately rather monotonous design.

In the slightly more than three decades between 1958 and 1990, about 2.2 million industrial-style apartments were built. Those are dimensions that were far above everything that could be reached in West Germany at that time: in West Germany, large housing estates only accounted for about 2.5 percent of the total housing stock, while the DDR reached a value of 22 percent.

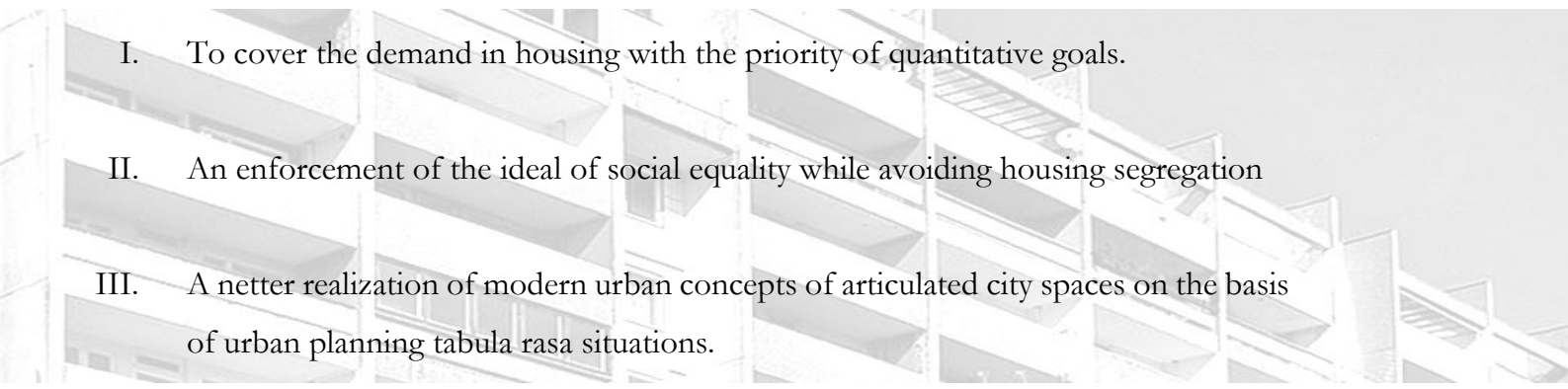


Figure 29: WBS 70 with 9 floors, 2010

In the DDR, four times as many large housing estates were built as in the West. Thus, with the end of the regime in 1990, about a quarter of all apartments consisted of prefabricated buildings. In the capital of East Berlin, even every *second* household was an industrially constructed apartment from DDR era.

4.3 The Plattenbau-Series 'WBS 70' from 1970

All in all, the industrial construction of mass housing in large housing estates should combine three key state-policy goals:

- 
- I. To cover the demand in housing with the priority of quantitative goals.
 - II. An enforcement of the ideal of social equality while avoiding housing segregation
 - III. A netter realization of modern urban concepts of articulated city spaces on the basis of urban planning tabula rasa situations.

In principle, these goals of solving former issues by mass housing in prefabricated construction were maintained until the end of the DDR in 1990. From the perspective of architectural aesthetics, socialist mass housing construction, especially in the DDR, is often described as trivial, as a nuisance and its architectural legacies often as "barren boxes". In their often ahistorical urban planning placements, they were described as "anti-historical" and for a long time after the turn of the century and in parts of the public, they still had a very bad reputation.

But it is still needed to mention, that the technology of prefabricated construction, which is an invention of the GDR, is a construction method that has a much longer and thoroughly international tradition. Due to the above-average use of panel building technology in the DDR, this type of building has received symbolic content for the East German state and its culture of remembrance.

When the construction series WBS 70 was conceived at the end of the 60s by Stallknecht, the DDR could already look back on 1,5 decades of experience in industrial construction. Of course, industrial construction in the DDR was not unpredictable, but built on developments that had already begun more than half a century earlier. After initial ideas for the industrialization of housing were developed, the development towards Plattenbau technology began at the beginning of the 20th century. During this time, the idea was born to build apartments by the help of "residential factories" and "housing machines" for the urgent needs of the growing working classes in the large agglomerations. As early as 1910, large plate steel structures had been erected in the USA. The American architect and urban planner Atterbury (1869-1956) has been dealing with processes of

rationalization of housing since 1902. Around 1910, he developed a housing concept in the New York district Queens, which was a process of prefabrication of large-sized components, which were sometimes room-high. This can be regarded as the actual beginning of the panel construction.

Each house was built from around 170 standardized concrete elements that were industrially prefabricated and assembled with cranes after delivery. The system was also known in Europe as the Atterbury system. In the middle 20s, Atterbury's system influenced numerous modernist architects in Europe, such as Ernst May, who at that time also used prefabricated panel-concrete systems in some well-known residential building experimental buildings in Frankfurt am Main, Germany.

With the National Socialist seizure of power, these experiments in industrial housing construction officially came to an abrupt end. In fact, however, they were continued: the architect Ernst Neufert, who was originally committed to the Bauhaus, was commissioned to develop a concept for the industrial production of housing and industrial construction for Albert Speer. In contrast, in the Soviet Union, in the individual Architects of architectural modernism had emigrated, as well as in the US continued experimenting in this field. After 1945, experiments in industrialized construction continued in Europe on a large scale. In East and West, new impulses for the intensification of the industrial housing construction and the large panel construction took place, not least because of the large need for new construction after the destruction by the Second World War.



S. Figure 8: Former Living-Room of a WBS-70 construction
“(...)romance and privacy didn’t have priority(...)”
Participant 2

5 Empirical-social studies on ‘WBS 70’ dwellings

5.1 Performance of interviews with former residents

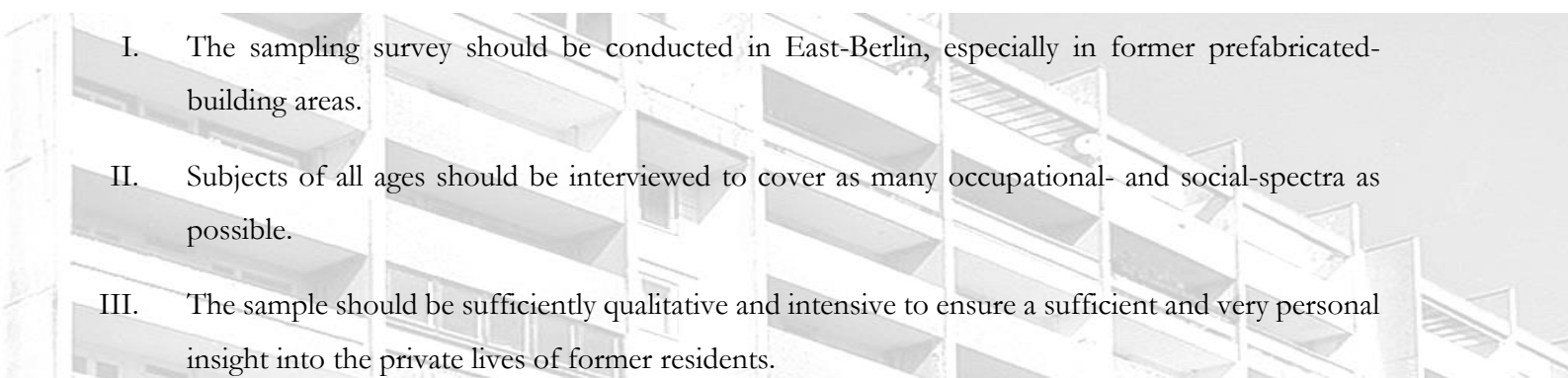
5.1.1 Empirical study preparation

For the present work, a cross-sectional design with a largely closed questionnaire (see Annexus 1, Questionnaire 1-9) was chosen to complete the investigations about the social well-being of former WBS 70 residents. A research-efficient qualitative approach was aimed. For this reason, a relatively small sample should be examined by means of detailed questions about the living and personal behaviour.

The basic goal to perform this study was to use the interviews as a tool to gain honest insights and impressions of the previous living situation in East-Berlin. Since it was very difficult in the past, to obtain meaningful material about the former living conditions, the goal of the interviews was to collect new information independently. Additionally, in former times, residents were not allowed to comment negatively on the housing situation, which naturally falsified any available interview material. However, after the wall was opened, another phenomenon became visible, as indeed, the former East-German citizens reached such a euphoric state after the opening of the Berlin Wall, that they addressed their East-German living experience extremely negative in all comparisons to the West. Of course, those statements might also be true, but it is believed that their emotional overshoot, at least partially, distorted the obtained results. Accordingly, the aim was to revitalise former residents’ old memories, almost 30 years after the fall of the Berlin Wall and gain honest impressions and emotions regarding their former living situation.

The subjects were willing to participate in this survey, which was executed by a questionnaire, implemented in a personal interview, which has been recorded at the same time. The subjects volunteered to answer the questions while being transcribed in writing as well. The interviews took place anonymously. Only study-relevant information was collected, including age, gender, professional and political orientation, etc. The questionnaire was not presented to the subjects in advance to achieve an honest response and an intense examination of the regarded issue. Since the results of the study strongly related the personal feelings of the test persons, the questions should deal with the former inhabitant’s history on a very private level.

This approach was underlined by the chosen questions. The following criteria were important for the creating of the research-related investigations:

- 
- I. The sampling survey should be conducted in East-Berlin, especially in former prefabricated-building areas.
 - II. Subjects of all ages should be interviewed to cover as many occupational- and social-spectra as possible.
 - III. The sample should be sufficiently qualitative and intensive to ensure a sufficient and very personal insight into the private lives of former residents.

The following chapters are presenting a detailed explanation of the course of action, which is followed by a summary of research outcomes. After discussing the primary research outcomes in the previous chapters, as well as clarifying and structuring the concepts of social well-being and interior design, the methodological approach of the study is ensuing. The question of research of the interviews, is as well formulated as the hypotheses of research (see chapter 1.1 Leading Thesis).

In the following, the results obtained from the data using the listed statistical methods are presented. The first table lists a basic socio-biographical data collection of all subjects. Accordingly, the research starts with the presentation of the investigation areas (see chapter 5.1.2 Investigation areas). Thereafter, an overview of the survey instruments, followed by the data collection procedure are presented (see chapter 5.1.3 Questionnaire and oral interviews - The data collection procedure). Afterwards follows a detailed description of the collected samples, additioned by a data analysis and concluded with some terminological clarifications (see chapter 5.1.3 Question samples and data analysis).

For the following samples of the interview, men and women from the East-Berlin districts of *Friedrichshain*, *Hellersdorf*, *Prenzlauer Berg* and *Weissensee* were invited to be interviewed. Ten subjects were asked to be interviewed (response rate 100%), six of them, men and four of them, women. All subjects were in-between the ages of 40 and 85. Ten out of ten interview records were incorporated into the presented analysis. Since both, mood and mental state, which are both included in the term of "well-being", are influenced by external framework, the aim of the present study is to determine the former social well-being of the group of volunteers mentioned above, which should also include personal components in the final result, such as the choice of occupation, the preferences of leisure time spent inside and outside of the apartment and the interest in religion and politics.

5.1.2 Investigation areas

As mentioned, the study was started on the 27th of April and took place in four different districts of the former eastern area of Berlin. The subjects one, two and three were all interviewed in Berlin's district Prenzlauer Berg. Hereby, the previously selected participants were asked to meet at a café in order to get interviewed. The subjects number four and five were also contacted in

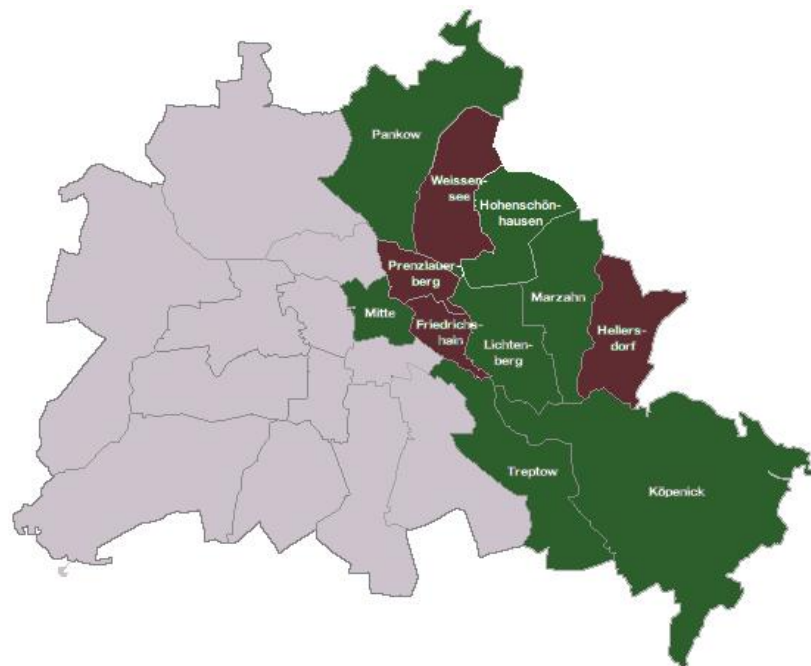


Figure 30: East-German districts from 1961 - 1989

advance to meet them later on in Berlin. This time, the meeting took place in the district of Friedrichshagen. The test person number six was visited in the residential district of Berlin Weissensee. This participant has been approached differently, as the residential area was visited first, with the objective to find a dweller who meets the criteria and afterwards to ask him/her to get interviewed. Both housing areas, Hellersdorf and Weissensee, were chosen by the help of the Urbanism University's housing cadastre, which made it obvious, that especially those two areas presented a high density of constructed WBS 70 buildings. Subjects eight, nine and ten were residents of a retirement-home in Hellersdorf. Hereby it was necessary to apply and state the reason of interest three weeks in advance, to get the permission to enter and perform interviews inside the facility. Moreover all three interviews inside the senior residence were monitored by the chief of the facility, to ensure an adequate procedure and to protect the resident's privacy

5.1.3 Questionnaire and oral interviews - The data collection procedure

Each participant should receive an information sheet together with the questionnaire, in which the aim and purpose of the study are briefly presented. The info sheet was written in two languages, German and English. The text, as well as a copy of the questionnaire itself, can be found in the appendix (see Annex 1). Moreover, at the beginning of the questionnaire, the anonymity of the investigation is pointed out. The former residents are assured that the data collected through the questionnaires will be evaluated anonymously and that no one except myself (as the researcher) will be given the questionnaires. The subjects were as well informed about that fact, that they should stop responding the questions as soon as they appear too personal to them. In order to reduce the inhibition threshold and to make the subjects feel more relaxed, a group interview was decided for two cases.

During the selection of candidates, care was taken to ensure the necessity that all future interviewees, lived in a prefabricated block of the WBS 70 series at the time of the DDR. Moreover, they should have lived there for at least 5 years or more, to determine any outcomes. Furthermore, it was crucial to include both gender groups in this survey, as well as, as many age groups as possible. For the here analysed interviews, ten volunteers between the ages of 40 and 81 were finally accepted, with 6, being between 40 and 60 years old and 4, between 60 and 80. The interviewees (hereafter referred to as interview partners) were located by assistance of the staff of the faculty of urban planning in Berlin. For this purpose, the mentioned employees provided former registration lists of the districts Friedrichshain, Hellersdorf, Prenzlauer Berg and Weissensee.

The interviews were conducted daily from April 27, 2018 until April 30, 2018. After the consent of each participant, the discussions were recorded additionally on a dictation machine and afterwards analysed, in course of the data-analysis. Each interview was saved for the purpose of anonymisation with changed names of the participants. All interviews were conducted and evaluated by myself. Nobody except me heard the recordings, which was promised to the interviewees before the questioning started. In order to be able to evaluate the statements of the subjects in detail, the interviews were first transcribed verbatim, supported by the transcription software NCH³¹. In addition to that, the transcripts were summarized to filter all valuable information material. Since the full number of interviews has been proceeded in German, the transcripts needed to be translated to English afterwards. All abnormalities of the language, such

³¹ NCH Scribe is professional audio player software for PC or Mac designed to help transcribe audio recordings.

as laughter, pauses, accents or speech defects, were noted separately and all paraverbal utterances, such as "hm", "er", "m-mh", were emphasized. After transcribing and translating the interviews, the results were summarized in tables, in order to get an overview of each subject and his/her former social situation. Subsequently, three tables were created for the purpose of analysis. The first table referred to, as already mentioned, the subjects and their personal data, including interests and social conditions. The second table summarizes the data and facts of the corresponding apartments, i.e. the size, the condition of the apartment and certain utilities, such as shower, bathtub or heating system. The last table tries to summarize the satisfaction of dwellers. For the final table, all interview statements were included and thereby a resultant rating was created. This rating reaches from "best living conditions" to "worst living conditions". This order was elaborated, based on all collected data, including for example the amount of square meters per apartment, the number of people who lived inside, the number of included children, the rental price and other additional statements recorded in the interview. Additionally it needs to be mentioned, that the ranking has not been elaborated by the respondents themselves.

In order to be able to illustrate the data collected with the help of the questionnaires, it was decided to proceed qualitatively. As the questionnaires provided an open field for respondents' wishes and comments, they were first analysed and categorized to provide a basis for qualitative research. The questions were intentionally designed and ordered to create a smooth flow, starting from very impersonal, more superficial questions, leading to very detailed private ones, regarding the dweller's emotional perceptions. As a result, the subjects should slowly be guided to the main topic, in order for them to open up optimally during the conversation. Through this approach, the participants should respond as honest as possible to the questions and retrieve positive or negative feelings from their housing history.

As a result, the sheet includes 19 questions which can be divided into three different sections. By this means, the questionnaire started with the *first section*, including a collection of information about the persons and their identification, capturing the general data of the test persons, which includes for example, the age, gender, marital status, the former profession or the former profession of their parents. This classified the social status and the financial situation of the participants more precisely. It also clarified whether the subject has spent his entire life in the DDR, especially in East-Berlin or if he / she moved there from another state. The sheet also included questions about the dweller's preferences regarding particular areas of life or living stages, such as family, education, work, leisure, religion, politics or romantic relationships. This classification took place in a rating

system starting from “1” and ending with “10”, in which “1” meant “very unsatisfied” and “10“, “very satisfied”.

These questions were intended to shed light on the then preferred day-structure and also to explain whether the subjects pursued many activities that took place within the home or spent most of the day outside the home instead. In the following more intense part follows the juxtaposition between preferred activities and real daytime design. Since drastic deviations with disappointment, discomfort and discomfort affect life, it is therefore investigated whether the housing situation had a significant influence on given deviations or whether these deviations derived from other nature. The occurrence of preferred activities, taking place within the apartment, has been checked to figure if and to which extent it could be carried out in reality.

The *second part* of the questions collected information about the housing situation, for instance, data regarding the number of the room, the square meters or the condition of windows or heating-system.

Continuously, the *third part* of the sheet was set up to inquire the routine of living inside the building. After the regular procedure, the test persons commented on their preferred location in the dwelling. As the answers were listed and the reasons of choice were clarified, it was asked whether the room was sufficiently used for the intended purposes or not. If a misuse was analysed, the extent and the background have been detected.

Subsequently, the questions became more and more intimate and the former residents commented on the availability of different types of space in the building. This section is subdivided into three parts.

- i. The first one referred to the question if house provided an area for retreatment, where the dwellers were able to be alone or capable to think peacefully and if he/she enjoyed this mentioned place. In the case of affirmation, the test person should describe the space and the extent of pleasure.
- ii. The second question was whether there was a place to be romantically involved with someone else or not and if yes, the subject was asked to describe the space.
- iii. The last attempt was to figure whether there was a place in the house to be social, in means of receiving friends, chatting or havening a drink with them. Repetitively, the person was describing this place and in the case of denial, he/she should describe where else this activity was experienced instead.

Those three questions cover the main three types of different human relationships. These questions were asked, in order to examine whether the places were corresponding to the necessary living requirements or if the mentioned relationships were interrupted by the provided space.

The questions were in so far openly structured, that the subjects were able to talk and answer freely. Due to that, the interview provided enough scope to let the conversation grow naturally during the course. As a result, the order of questions often diverged, as some questions automatically arose in the context of previous answers and were continued, in this sense of keeping the conversation fluid and uninterrupted. Nevertheless, it was always ensured that all questions were adequately answered, until the end of the talks.

“My friends always liked to come to our house, because I had an own room.”
Participant 3



S. Figure 9: Former Bed-Room of a WBS-70 construction

5.1.4 Question samples and data analysis

This chapter presents the results of the previously done investigations. What can already be told in advance is, how it turned out that all former residents expressed oppressive feelings in relation to their former housing situation. This outcome was completely independent of whether the former dwellers were at the age of a child, a teenager or already grown up. Conspicuous, however, was the result that, despite the negative emotional state, no emotions were expressed regarding deprivation or neediness. The upcoming text breaks down all individual questions, while summarizing the meaningful answers as well as highlighting single statements. The following information is fully taken from the transcripts of the interviews and can be read in the appendix of this work.

- I. The first section of the sheet (No. 1) starts with obtaining information about the candidate's identity. In this case, age, gender, job (former job, if any), as well as parent's jobs, former residence and the fact whether the person has always lived in the former DDR, or moved there later called in, asked.
- II. The second question (No.2) included a table about the dweller's preferences regarding particular areas of life. This list was divided into classifications, where the subjects were asked to place their answer according to a rating system starting from "1" and ending with "10", in which "1" meant "very unsatisfied" and "10", "very satisfied". In this concern, the list asked for following areas: education, work, romantic relationships, children, personal security, a clean and intact environment, leisure time, an adequate dwelling, an affordable dwelling, religion, politics and interpersonal relationships. The sum of all subjects, gave family, work and social security (in this order) the most value. Those three leading values were followed by children, an affordable housing, education, romantic relationships and a clean and intact environment. Clearly, the bottom of the table formed leisure time and religion. Above all, the people living in the former DDR, seemed to be very work-conscious and ambitious. In order to reach as much as possible, they became willing to sacrifice distracting interests such as religious belief or social relations.
- III. The next one (No.3) dealt with the subject's personal beliefs about their personal well-being and overall satisfaction of life. The question was asked quite directly and divided into five different levels of satisfaction-levels, ranging from "very satisfied" to "not at all satisfied". This question was not only concerning domestic circumstances, but about their

life in general and should be used to get a rough understanding of the person's personal perception of well-being, in advance. It was quite interesting, how none of the interviewees even hinted into the direction to be dissatisfied about their lives. All recorded answers varied between "very satisfied" and "satisfied".

- IV. This section (No. 4, No. 5, No. 6) interviewed the former residents about apartment and furnishings data, such as the number of available rooms, the number of occupants per apartment and the number of dependently living children in the household. By evaluation of those three components, indeed, the former housing situation clearly showed up with large grievances. Only one respondent was adequately accommodating in terms of available space and number of tenants, while nine out of ten respondents explained that they were at least one more person than acquired. More than 50 percent of those nine subjects, were even super numerous by two to three people per apartment. On an emotional level, the participants dealt very differently with the situation, as four of the nine participants stated that they had been satisfied even despite the scarce housing situation and ensured that, overall, they did not have any problems, since it was just common back then. The other five, though, complained strongly and became very emotional talking about the issue during the survey. Apparently this issue harmed their well-being partly.
- V. The following questions (No. 7, No. 8) dealt with the total available of square meters per apartment and how much rent the respective parties had to pay for that. It surprisingly occurred not rarely, that tenants with the same number of rooms and square meters, often paid a quite variable amount for rent. This conspicuousness could be traced back to the fact that it was apparently possible to lower the rent with good contacts to the state.
- VI. The next category (No. 9) was a list of home furnishings that should be questioned. In this regard, the test subjects should comment on whether the following things were installed well or at least existed inside the apartment - and to which extent they worked properly. The list included, regarding the bathroom-area, a bathtub or a shower, warm water, natural light inside the bathroom. In terms of the existing heating type, a district-heating system, a central-heating system, a story-heating system and gas were in demand. However, the apartments were all equally equipped and the answers were repetitive, as there was no natural light in any of the bathrooms and all of the apartments had a central-heating system installed. The only difference was notable regarding the heating system, as some buildings

just had the heating newly installed and therefore it showed deficits or did not work yet. **"(...) we got a 2-bedroom apartment from the KWV and moved directly in. But as the building was just constructed, nothing worked."** (Participant 7)

VII. The following (No. 10) investigated on the fact whether the inhabitants had any access to an own garden or a green space close to the apartment. The whole group of participants answered collectively with "no". Moreover, nine out of ten dwellers did not have other access to green places around their area of living, which was close enough to reach it by feet. One out of ten families represented the exception, since they were in possession of a weekend-property including a small wooden cabin, located in the suburban area of Berlin. However, according to the subjects, those allowances were favored, but usually easier accessible by working for the regime, which many families strongly opposed.

VIII. This question (No. 11, No. 12) concerned the inner room temperature, in order to investigate whether the apartments provided a comfortable atmospheric environment or not. Additionally it has been asked, what kind of heating system has been installed and if it always worked without any difficulties.

All but one subjects, answered to this question consistently positive. They, moreover, confirmed that their newly installed heating-system functioned far better than the old ones in former houses. As coal-heating-systems were common in old buildings in the Germany, most of the subjects spent their childhood carrying coals for heating. By moving to a newly constructed building with a central-heating system, this said effort disappeared. The participants assured the personal relief about the new system and how far it raised their living quality. **"We used to only have coal before and then we did not have to carry coal, for the first time in our life, so that was a huge advantage!"** (Participant 2) Additionally, the former residents noted that the heating system, with one exception, could generally be well adjusted from within the apartment. The only frequently mentioned issue, regarding the interior temperature, was the rapidly evaporating heat, as the insulation coating in WBS 70 series has not been adequately installed, due to budget constraints. The housing series was therefore hardly able to ensure a stable comfortable temperature throughout the year.

IX. The upcoming two questions (No. 13, No. 14) referred to the windows of the WBS 70 series. This issue arised with regard to solar radiation, shading possibilities, substance and,

moreover, the possibility of sufficient ventilation to ensure balanced room temperature as well as air quality.

Surprisingly, all subjects responded unanimously positively and assured that all windows could be opened sufficiently and the rooms including windows (bedroom, living room), were always sufficiently exposed. Some deviations came up in regard to the shadings, as some subjects would have liked to install shadings. The installation, however, was prohibited in the context of the optical equality of all building facades. Regarding this issue, no exceptions could have been made, no matter how well the families were connected to the state, since the facades had to remain consistent in all circumstances, in order to present the socialist idea of equality. **"As it was all about the principle of the former times, we were not allowed to attract attention with our apartment, so they all had to look the same."** (Participant 4) The substance of the windows was not criticized at all, one subject (see Annex 1, Interview No. 5, No. 6) was even amused about the unnecessary question.

- X. The following question (No. 15) considered the storage space inside the apartments. The subjects were therefore asked whether they had enough space to store all the residential objects or if any problems occurred. This time, the answers varied widely, as households accommodating more than the intended number of residents, explicitly suffered from space problems and had already little room for themselves, not to mention for objects. However, contrary to that, some tenants responded reassuringly, that they simply did not have enough property to create a lack of space. The households, which were inhabited by the predicted number of inhabitants and moreover also the households accommodating one person more than planned - were usually sufficiently satisfied and appeared to have enough storage space for all objects and clothes. Another solution, according to one participant, was to rebuild the available storage options inside the apartment themselves. **"(...) my father was a carpenter and thankfully he often built furniture including storage space by himself, which took some of our issues away."** (Participant 3) Nevertheless, it can be concluded that the majority of the subjects, which were seven out of ten, were not sufficiently satisfied with the storage space situation and had to come up with emergency solutions, such as sharing clothes or using the storage space in the damp cellar. **"(...) everyone had quite the same issues about space (...)." (Participant 3)**

- XI. The questions following (No. 16, No. 17) appeared to become the most important one, in terms of social interaction and the potential impact on the development of former inhabitants.

The section started with the question, in which rooms, the inhabitants were mostly present or which one the dweller's preferred in the most way. The participants should continuative state their preferred location and try to explain the reason of their choice. According to this, all test persons told their preferred location inside the apartment and where they spent most of their time. Subsequently, the questions turned quite intimate. The question sheet was divided into three sections, as mentioned above, and dealt with the supply of an adequate level of privacy. In this sense, the first one referred to the question whether the apartment provided an area for retreatment, where the dwellers were able to be in silence or where they would have been capable to think peacefully. In the case of affirmation, the test person should describe that exact space and the extent of pleasure. The second question was whether there was a place to be romantically involved with someone else or not and if the answer was "yes", the subject was again asked to describe that space. Last but not least, the attempt was to figure whether there was a place inside the house to be socially involved, in means of receiving friends, chatting or havening a drink with someone. Repetitively, the person was again asked to describe this place and in the case of denial, he/she should describe where else this activity has been experienced instead.

As already mentioned above, the space situation inside the apartments was generally quite difficult to grasp, from today's perspective. Nine out of ten test persons lived collectively in a higher number of people in the apartment than it had been construed for. Only one person lived in an adequate ratio, as a single person in a 2-room apartment. However, this fact only came to place, as the participant was abandoned by his former partner, who therefore moved out of the apartment. Space problems were apparently ubiquitous and a standard issue in the former DDR living situation. The dimension of those space issues, however, varied from household to household. While some subjects lived with their siblings and their parents in a 2- or 3-room apartment, where siblings had to share a room for two - there also existed very dramatic cases, in which one family, a number of 5 dwellers, had to share two rooms.

But apart from that, in almost every case, the parents were very generous to their children. Almost all of them, gave their bedroom to the eldest child, in order to use it as a nursery. **"(...) I actually had my own room because my parents gave me their bedroom,**

which was a really nice move!" (Participant 3) Therefore, one subject per household had the opportunity of privacy, while the others gave it up. **"My friends always liked to come to our house, because I had an own room (...)"** (Participant 3) The children of younger ages, normally, had to share a room, but in the worst case, there were also subjects who did not have a room at all and therefore needed to sleep in the kitchen area. **"I was in my room with my sister, friends visiting me, was hardly possible at all."** (Participant 2) After the oldest child moved into the bedroom, the parents retreated to the living room as a standard for living and sleeping. Every living room was furnished with a couch that could be turned into a bed. **"My parents had a fold-out couch and lived and slept there."** (Participant 3) What sounds very lucrative as a sidestep sleeping-place, however, turned out to become difficult in terms of social life. Asking the question, where one could be social with friends, everyone alike replied, that their parents just did not have a social life, because of the missing possibility of space division. Since either the children had to go to school early, or one of the adults had to go to work, there was no room to remain with friends, while the others wanted to sleep. In those living conditions where children had to sleep in the kitchen, it became even more dramatic, as the kitchen area could not be locked from the living room. According to this, the living room needed to stay in silence as soon as the children needed to go to bed.

When asking whether people had a space for retreat or a place to read a book, all respondents unanimously negated the question. Accordingly, it was usual to leave the apartment for those purposes, since there was simply no free area inside. As it was already hard enough to find enough space to accommodate all utilities, numerous people had to share spaces, following the only chance of a provided spark of privacy would have appeared if, by chance, all the other people did not happen to be there. So, theoretically, it was perfectly possible to be alone for one or two hours a day, if the family members had agreed on a good deal, but the subjects explained that this was far more complicated in real life. Another statement, however, was that people at the time, were simply getting used to not doing certain activities alone, such as reading for example, as they became already so used to share their space with others.

Moving to the intimate part of this section, asking whether there was a place in the apartment to get romantically involved or not, the majority of the subjects reacted very humorous, as it seemed, that this question addressed one of the major issues of living, quite

directly. **"Privacy or romantic relationships were not essential for living and therefore we could not ask for that. It was the state's goal to give each family a house, not a luxury life."** (Participant 7) At this time in Germany, it was already standard procedure to invite partners to their families' apartments to spend time there, even as a teenager. Eight out of ten respondents complained badly about the housing situation regarding this issue. **"Once, at night, I let my boyfriend sneak into the flat when my parents were asleep, my mother noticed it anyway, as mothers are, and the trouble about that lasted forever!"** (Participant 9) Although it was possible for the one, mentioned eldest child, to spend private time with friends or a partner in his/her room, the majorities of families usually consisted of, at least, two children. Therefore, the younger child always suffered from a loss of privacy, as long as the older sibling still lived in the same house. If the difference in age was not far apart from each other, the situation was even more depressing for the second child, since it took at least 18 years for the oldest kid to move out of the apartment. **"I was always really angry with my parents as a child, because I did not understand, why friends were not allowed to visit me at home."** (Participant 5) But according to this, however, the standard procedure was of course, to leave the parent's house as early as possible. Even in households accommodating only one child, according to the interviewees, the kids were literally thrown out of the house when they reached the age of 18, as the parents were reclaiming their capitulated privacy. **"I think if it would have taken any day longer, they probably would not be together anymore."** (Participant 6) Understandably, the lack of privacy was as well transferred to the adult members of the family. **"(...) it was horrible for my parents, I guess. Honestly, I think they've been arguing a lot more since we moved into that apartment."** (Participant 3) While the living room could be used by all residents during the day, the parents claimed it at night for themselves. But the living room was always an open living space, which never guaranteed the desired flair of intimacy. In the worst case, mentioned above, where children had to sleep in the kitchen, there has never been any glimpse of privacy anyway. **"The three of us were staying in the living room and my sister had an extra mattress in the kitchen and was allowed to stay until 8 am in the living room, before everyone went to bed."** (Participant 4)

- XII. The penultimate question of the sheet (No. 18), referred, apart from the actual living conditions inside the apartments, to dweller's wishes. Therefore it was asked what the subjects, in a purely fictional way of thinking, would have liked to change, if they had the

opportunity to do so. Curiously, this question has first been rejected from nine out of ten participants, with reference to the fact, that it was just not possible to change a lot back then. After reiterating the question's fictive validity, two subjects said how it would have been nice to get natural light inside the bathroom area. Six other subjects stated that they, needless to say, wished for more space. **"Well, the issue about the space was so bad that you couldn't really notice any other problems."** (Participant 6) Moreover, two others revealed, that they wanted roller blinds, were not allowed to install those, as already mentioned above. In spite of everything, none of the interviewees commented with a demonstrative number of wishes. Quite the contrary took place, the subjects were all very modest and seemed emotionally stable about the question. All in all, the participants gave the strong impression, that none of them felt losses in such a way, that they sensed any limitation of living for this reason. **"It all sounds very dramatic right now, but it was not. I really had a nice childhood!"** (Participant 7) **"(...) looking back, I can't complain too much!"** (Participant 3) This phenomenon can, perhaps, be explained by the fact that the omnipresent of grievance arose a whole new cohesion referring the social sector. According to statements, the willingness to help in-between the neighborhood was immense and in contrast to today, it was also elemental that dwellers of the same housing complex, knew and supported each other. **"The neighborhood helped and traded and if one thing was missing, then surely one of the neighbors next door had it."** (Participant 3)

- XIII. The final question (No. 19) of every interview related to the issue whether the families respectively the parents, ever desired or discussed to move out or to move to another home. Nine out of ten respondents were largely surprised about this question and then definitely denied the answer. One person (see Annex 1, Interview No. 1) felt so attacked that the conversation had to be stopped directly. The replies of all the other residents were questioned afterwards, to the final revealing that they would have definitely liked to move in reality, but the former times never opened any possibility to get a better apartment and none of the citizens could even pretentiously think about the idea to wish for changes. **"(...) there wasn't any possibility. (...) there were a lot of families in worse conditions than ours. That's why it was alright."** (Participant 3) Possibly, this behaviour occurred also to prevent disappointment of unfillable desires. The financial and political situation of the former DDR was so determinant for people's lives and living that their own preferences and wishes could not be taken into account.

5.2 Brief résumé

Summarized, it can be stated that almost every source of error occurred due to the serious lack of space inside the apartments. The former residents responded very emotionally to the questions related to the personal areas and the lack of privacy. Apparently, the compulsive division of rooms and necessity of sharing of each meter within the apartment, limited the social coexistence. At least on an emotional level, the test persons still do not seem to have overcome those experiences. The conditions of the apartment, however, turned out to be on a sufficient to good level. The equipment of the apartment, referring to bathroom, kitchen and other utensils has been sufficient as well. The offence about the lack of space, overlapped any other wishes, such as a bathroom with daylight, completely. Another outcome was the fact that the results hardly relied on any of those variables, such as age or sex. All subjects concluded more or less to the same statements.

Striking, however, was the fact that although the participants stated such serious issue regarding their private lives, none of the subjects was seriously offended about it. All interviewees agreed that the times simply did not leave any other possibility and they still spent a well-sheltered childhood. As already mentioned, this outcome could be explained, as all those problems enriched the dwellers life on the social level a lot. People became more helpful and open to their neighbourhood, automatically. By forcing everyone to rely on help and trade, many bonds were built and social life has been relocated outside.

However, the lack of space was by no means the fault of the residents, since the allocation of apartments into WBS 70 houses was not privatized, but only organized and contracted by the KWV, which was always state-owned. Accordingly, it can be argued that the former inhabitants, pursued the best possible solutions to shape their living environment inside the apartments as comfortable as possible. The families, especially the parents, made many sacrifices, to not complicate their children's personal development in any way. The children learnt how to share everything they had, even personal space, while the neighbourhoods built such a strong bond, that they could rely on each other in every occasion. From a psychological point of view, the former buildings brought out the very best of their inhabitants.

6 Evaluation and final considerations

Returning to the starting point of this paper, the investigation began by researching the general housing situation of East-Berlin's inhabitants. Effectively, speaking as a German citizen, the fact that a dissatisfaction-factor has been prevailed regarding the housing conditions, was not a surprise - even without studying the former researches before. The Berlin-Wall, which divided Germany at this time, indeed, fell, but unfortunately a certain separation still remains mentally in the minds of the citizens. Nowadays, when talking about the DDR, it far too often appears, that a subliminal trace of pity points to the poor situation of former DDR residents. However, those manners makes many people of younger generations suspicious, as it is difficult to understand how far this behaviour can be justified or not.

This work, which started with existing research papers of other academics, who tried to understand this situation as well and has been completed through self-investigated studies, gives a small insight how housing in the former DDR really took place. Compared to the previous researches, it has to be confirmed that, in fact, there had been a true misery, regarding the living space, but nevertheless this issue did not cover all aspects of living.

While the main cause of all complaints related to the lack of space, the families automatically needed to move very close together due to the said problem. The residents developed behaviours and connections that are nowadays rather unknown. This does not exclude the fact that people would not have wished, to have their situation changed. They certainly lost many social and personal components due to the limited housing conditions. This final evaluation should just point out that each shadow side also contains positive aspects, which might not be noticeable at first glance. To state an example, none of the subjects intentionally commented on their strong neighbourly bonds, on the close friendships or the creative self-built emergency solutions, in order to gain more room for storage solutions. However, this situation resulted automatically due to these issues. The willingness to share and help, learned already at a young age, manifested itself over the years and was completely taken for granted by the 40 to 80-year-old test persons.

After illuminating, both, the darker and brighter shades of the former housing situation, this work returns to the initial question whether and how much influence interior-architecture can perform on the social well-being of its inhabitants. This question can be clearly affirmative answered, as the interior situation has cut deeply into the social life and daily plans of every individual resident. Although the problem cannot be traced back to the interior-architecture per se, its influence can be confirmed despite everything. In this particular case, the interior-architecture itself has become

the victim of the socialist housing policy, which was actually planned to save the situation. The intentions were as well comprehensible, but in terms of the construction industry and the future inhabitants, the budget should not be saved on the wrong concerns. Of course, it might also be cheaper to inhabit more residents, than actually planned in one apartment, but the outcome is a nullification of the complete architectural work, as all rooms become diverted from their intended use.

Although, previous living conditions could be partially revealed, the deliberate attempt to evaluate the apartments on an architectural basis failed as a result of this surveys, since no clear statement could be accomplished about the apartments themselves. Any statement issued, would have been falsified by the incorrect use of premises. In order to adequately assess the apartments on an architectural level, former residents, who inhabited the apartments in the planned number of residents, needed to be located and interviewed. According to the respondents, however, this occurrence was far from the norm.

Despite of everything, this paper presented, as desired, an honest insight into the former lives of DDR citizens, including all negative and positive aspects. This research sheet can now be used for further investigations, concerning this topic. With regard to interior-architecture, it can be expressly stated how the right planning in the first place, is one of the most important instruments in means of influencing dwellers, who represent the whole society. Architecture, obviously, affects everyone's daily life and must be treated with great respect. Referring to the political point of view, the focus must be placed correctly. As it could be seen before, the supposedly best planning, becomes obsolete, if the architecture is subsequently treated in the wrong way. Those considerations do, of course, not only refer to earlier times, but they are applicable guidelines, which should be considered at any time of projecting.

The moreover, surprisingly positive effect of adverse events, may be a reminder to illuminate each situation from both sides, before any conclusions should be drawn. Speaking again as a German, the behaviour of many people has become more comprehensible, however, this study allows me to intervene the proximate conversation and uncover the authentic situation by means of clear facts.

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9 Attachments

Annexus 1

detailed interviews about the former housing situation in East Germany in cooperation with former DDR residents, from 27th – 30th of April, 2018.

Interview No. 1:



UNIVERSIDADE
DE LISBOA



FACULDADE DE ARQUITETURA
UNIVERSIDADE DE LISBOA

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

A detailed survey about the former housing situation in East Germany

PARTICIPANT 1# - 27th April 2018, 14:30pm, Berlin

[Interviewer] First of all, thank you for your time, should we sit down in the garden?

[Participant 1] Yeah, please. We could do that.

[Interviewer] May I ask, how old you are? Well, I just need to know, how old you were at the time of the Wall.

[Participant 1] Well, well, I'm 76 now. When I moved into my apartment, I think I was in my 40s. But I can't say exactly anymore. But let's say 42.

[Interviewer] Okay, okay. And from where to where did you move? And did you move alone or with your wife?

[Participant 1] No no, I lived there with my girlfriend. But unfortunately this was not meant to be forever.

[Interviewer] May I asked what happened?

[Participant 1] Yes, well. Life happened and she left me and moved out, so afterwards I had the 2 room apartment alone.

[Interviewer] Wow okay..What did you work for in the past, if I may ask?

[Participant 1] I did an apprenticeship and then I was at the engineering school where I was trained to become a machine-engineer.

[Interviewer] And how did you live, did you own the flat or rent it?

[Participant 1] Well that was in Zirldorf firstly, with my parents, in a prefabricated house without a garden. But later, when I moved, we had a smaller apartment in Reinigendorf.

[Interviewer] What was the name of the village?

[Participant 1] No, it was the district of Reinigendorf.

[Interviewer] Okay, sorry, I am not originally from Berlin, but I guess you can already know that from my accent..

[Participant 1] Haha yes, that's obvious.

[Interviewer] So you said you lived alone afterwards?

[Participant 1] Yeah right, the last few years always alone.

[Interviewer] And you did not have any children?

[Participant 1] No, I was not married either.

[Interviewer] Do you remember whether there was hot water or not in the apartment?

[Participant 1] Yes, of course, definitely. Warm water, but no natural light. Haha.

[Interviewer] Bath and shower or both?

[Participant 1] Just a shower.

[Interviewer] And the heating system was how equipped? Did it always work perfectly?

[Participant 1] Well, it was a standard central-heating system. Well, what can I say, you could not complain about it, after all, at least you had an apartment.

[Interviewer] This means.. ?

[Participant 1] Well the heating existed, but did not work properly. Or well, in other words, it worked somehow, but it was still just cold. Nevertheless, the apartment was better than the old buildings from earlier times. Everything was broken and no-one took care of it. Here, at least, the KWV came by, every now and then, to make sure that things still work.

[Interviewer] Did anything work by gas, for instance, a gas stove?

[Participant 1] No, not at all.

[Interviewer] And how many rooms did the apartment have?

[Participant 1] We had 2 rooms. The whole apartment had more or less, 50 square meters.

[Interviewer] Do you still remember how much you have paid back then?

[Participant 1] No, unfortunately I do not remember.

[Interviewer] Well, do you still know whether it felt like much, little or appropriate, even if you do not know the exact number?

[Participant 1] Well let's say it was appropriate.

[Interviewer] And you said earlier, that you had access to your own garden?

[Participant 1] Yes and no that was about the first apartment in Zirlndorf, it was the apartment of my father and it was a special housing unit for civil servants. So everything was a bit fancier than usually haha.

[Interviewer] But in the last apartment, there wasn't any access?

[Participant 1] No no, there was nothing. Everything was purely urban and at that time, the city wasn't about green spaces at all.

[Interviewer] Okay let us talk about the apartment itself, do you still know in which rooms you spent most of your time?

[Participant 1] There was only the living room and the bedroom. So I spent my time in the living room, when I was not working - I did things like, reading to the newspaper, watching TV etc. People were actually very rare, we had so much work to do and no one had space. If there was any time for meeting friends, we maybe had a beer outside of the house.

[Interviewer] And did you always have enough storage space in the rooms, or in the overall apartment?

[Participant 1] Well there were only 2 rooms! So there were not many possibilities. Well, I just did not have that many things.

[Interviewer] And did you ever think that you might like to move - if you could?

[Participant 1] No, I just could not do that.

[Interviewer] So you were satisfied, or was it just..?

[Participant 1] No, I HAD to be satisfied. Of course it was everything but great, but it was a roof over your heads and you do not know how hard it was to get one of those new buildings. The old apartments were much worse.

[Interviewer] Okay, okay, I understand. But do you remember anything else that you would have liked to change in any way?

[Participant 1] NO, don't you understand?! I just had to settle for it! It had to be affordable! How do you imagine that?!

[Interviewer] No,no, no I am sorry, I did not mean to upset you, I just want to know what the living situations were like. Anyway thank you for your time and have a nice day!

[Participant 1] All good. Have a nice day too!

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

A detailed survey about the former housing situation in East Germany

PARTICIPANT 2# - 27th April 2018, 15:30pm, Berlin

[Interviewer] Mr. Albrecht, do you want to go out into the garden? And may I ask how old you are? As I need to know how old you were at the time of the Wall. And may I ask about your former job as well?

[Participant 2] I was a photo-lab assistant and when the wall was built, I was just born. I was born in 1961, so I am 56 right now.

[Interviewer] Okay thank you, well, I'll start with questions about the apartment right away okay? How did you live inside the Plattenbau, I mean how many rooms and how many people lived there?

[Participant 2] So when we moved in, we were 5. My parents and my 2 sisters and me. So it was already well stocked haha.

[Interviewer] Okay, so 5 people. And how many rooms did the apartment have then?

[Participant 2] 3 rooms. So I was the youngest, but I have to say, I take my hat off to my parents. They left their bedroom to my eldest sister, when she was 15 and they rather slept on the sofa in the living room, while my other sister and I had to share another room next door.

[Interviewer] Okay wow, yes I can imagine that. But that wasn't easy right? About organisation and also about privacy?

[Participant 2] Yeah, there was no privacy at all, haha. My sister had her boyfriend from time to time at home, because she could lock her room after all. But my parents have completely abandoned their social life inside the apartment. We always had to go to bed at 10 and then they converted the couch to a bed. As I had to share the room with my sister, I was never home anyway. So everyone at school met at this one friend's house, whose parents worked for the state and had a big flat.

[Interviewer] Oha okay, so everything worked through contacts to the state?

[Participant 2] Yes, of course. Everything. Cars, apartments, food. The closer you were to the party, the better life you got.

[Interviewer] Okay another question: Was there warm water in the apartment? Bath and shower or both?

[Participant 2] Yes that was already there. We had a bathtub and hot water.

[Interviewer] And the heating system was how equipped? Did it always work perfectly?

[Participant 2] Yes, it worked well. We used to only have coal before and then we did not have to carry coal, for the first time in our life, so that was a huge advantage!

[Interviewer] Were there also functions with gas, like a gas stove?

[Participant 2] No not at all.

[Interviewer] Do you still remember how much your parents paid?

[Participant 2] Well it was about a 100 marks

[Interviewer] Did you have access to a garden?

[Participant 2] No, there was no green at all.

[Interviewer] Okay, let's get back to the apartment, do you remember in which rooms you stayed most of the day? And your parents as well? Or, if I may ask so directly, was there any place for more private activities or did your parents still have a retreat for any romantic evenings?

[Participant 2] Haha, now you're asking something! I never thought about that before, but not, at all. Well, there were not many possibilities. I was in my room with my sister, friends visiting me, was hardly possible at all. Until 10 o'clock we were allowed to be mostly in the living room. But when I wanted to be alone or get some privacy, I'm was forced to go outside of the house and mostly stayed away as long as possible. My parents were always in the living room, maybe my mother spent some time in the kitchen as well, and the roles were very strict back then, nothing compared to today. But like I said, romance and privacy was really small written back then.

[Interviewer] And did you always have enough storage space inside the apartment?

[Participant 2] Well well, well. We had to organize ourselves very well and we just could not have much.

[Interviewer] And did your parents ever have the idea to move?

[Participant 2] Yes, there was always the question about more space but we did not have any other chance!

[Interviewer] Okay, okay, I understand. But do you still remember something you would have liked to change?

[Participant 2] Well the space was definitely the main problem, heating was alright, but daylight in the bathroom would have been nice sometimes.. and the insulation was, let's say, not the best. But on the other hand, you could not complain, life did not work in any other way. We were lucky to HAVE an apartment, so it was just fine.

[Interviewer] Okay, then I thank you a lot for you time and all the details. Good afternoon!



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INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

A detailed survey about the former housing situation in East Germany

PARTICIPANT 3# - 27th April 2018, 17:15pm, Berlin

[Interviewer] Hello, it is really kind of you to drive here, just for this interview! Thanks again! What would you like to drink?

[Participant 3] Don't worry, it is a pleasure. I'm serious, asking about participants in this Facebook group was a really smart idea. I would bet a lot that you will find some good help in there, and above all, quite a lot of people like to talk about old times again, haha.

[Interviewer] Yes, I'm really happy about the response! And may I start right away and ask how old you are - or were - back then in DDR times? Have you always lived in East Berlin?

[Participant 3] Well, you don't need to be so formal, but just for the record. My name is Steffen and I'm 50 at the moment and back then, when we moved into the prefab. building, I was just in my mid-20s. Yeah, I was always in the East. It was hard to get away, you know haha.

[Interviewer] Haha right. Okay, so I'll continue with questions about the flat now, alright? How did you live in the WBS 70? And how many rooms did you have and how many people were you?

[Participant 3] We were three then. My parents and I and we had 2 rooms. So bedroom and living room. And I actually had my own room because my parents gave me their bedroom, which was a really nice move! Well back then, I did not really understand that, only when we were with friends and always had to play and sleep in the living room of their apartments, I thought it was really annoying, but I did not understand that it was a huge exception to have an OWN room. My parents had a fold-out couch and lived and slept there.

[Interviewer] Okay wow, so your parents sacrificed a lot to offer you a nice childhood? But that wasn't really easy right? And if I may ask about the privacy level?

[Participant 3] Not easy at all! So my parents, for example, never had friends to visit them, because they did not know where to go, or sometimes when someone was there, they had to leave at 9, if my mother or father wanted to go to sleep and then there was no other place to stay. And after a while, they just stopped inviting people because they had so many argues about that topic. It was so much easier for me.. My friends always liked to come to our house, because I had an own room, which was totally alright with the standard furniture and windows, so I couldn't really complain.

[Interviewer] Yes I can imagine! Now another question: Was there warm water in the apartment? Bath and shower or both?

[Participant 3] Yes, there was - in all Plattenbau buildings - so water and heating worked well. We had hot water and a central heating system. We cooked with gas, because we installed it afterwards without the KWV knowing about it. But well, about the cooking, that reminds me of another thing, sometimes my mother even slept in the kitchen, when they had one of those previous visits and she had to work early in the morning the next day. But that's what I meant before, there was so much conflict about all of that, and as I said, at some point there wasn't anything happening here anymore.

[Interviewer] Okay, thanks for the really detailed information. Do you still remember how much you had paid?

[Participant 3] Yes it was really little, as it was all owned by the state. 25 marks or similar.

[Interviewer] And did you have access to a garden?

[Participant 3] No no, well my parents had a weekend property, quite far outside of Berlin, which was very nice! This became established around that time as well, since there wasn't any green to go and everyone had quite the same issues about space and privacy, it was the norm that everyone tried to get one of those weekend properties.

[Interviewer] Okay, but back to the apartment, that means you were mainly in your room and your parents in the living room?

[Participant 3] Haha, yes, exactly, in my room. Of course, when I got older, I also had a place to invite the ladies. So I had my retreat and equally the space in the living room for common use. But it was horrible for my parents, I guess. Honestly, I think they've been arguing a lot more since we moved into that apartment.. But the apartment was assigned to us, so what should we have done differently.

[Interviewer] Oh yeah wow ... yes I understand. And again a very different topic, did you always had enough storage space in the apartment?

[Participant 3] Well, honestly not. But my father was a carpenter and thankfully he often built furniture including storage space by himself, which took some of our issues. But well, it was very narrow. Actually, there would have been an attic, but it was also always completely full of laundry. Well and theoretically we also had a cellar, but the basements was ALWAYS wet, because Berlin has a relatively high groundwater level, so if you start digging 2 meters, you are certainly going to stand in the water and that's why no one could really use that space and the attic went so busy.

[Interviewer] Okay, and did your parents ever wanted to move?

[Participant 3] Well I think so, but there wasn't any possibility. So there were a lot of families in worse conditions than ours. That's why it was alright... Except for the fact that my parents were of course waiting for me to finally move out, so they could get back their normal life again, but over the years there was an increasing housing shortage and less and less apartments for rent, so I still lived with them until my 30s.

[Interviewer] Okay, okay, I understand. But do you still remember something that would have changed?

[Participant 3] Well, in retrospect, I would have wished that my parents might not have given up so much for me, but as a kid I did not think about that. The windows were sometimes leaking, but the KWV took care of that at least. And if the KWV wasn't available, I have to say that, we have managed to do it ourselves very well, because we became innovative from the very beginning. The neighbourhood helped and traded and if one thing was missing, then surely one of the neighbours next door had it. That's how we've always made the best of it! So looking back, I can't complain too much!

[Interviewer] Okay, thanks for all the details, it was really helpful! Then I thank you and leave you alone again. Good afternoon!

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

A detailed survey about the former housing situation in East Germany

PARTICIPANT 4# - 28th April 2018, 13:00pm, Berlin

[Interviewer] Good day, do you want to sit down as long as the weather is that nice?

[Participant 4] Yes, why not, we can do that, then I can smoke another one, haha. And again, sorry to ask, but you study architecture or interior-architecture or how exactly is the situation?

[Interviewer] Well, I study architecture quite regularly, but my issue, or better my thesis, is concerned about the interiors of WBS 70s. But well, I think it is important to explore interior-architecture as well, just to have an overall idea of the process and what's important, otherwise it will be hard to project adequately, I guess.

[Participant 4] Yes, that makes sense, of course. Okay kid, so what do you want to know?

[Interviewer] Haha right. Okay, so it's all about living. I'll ask you directly about your apartment in the former DDR, okay? How did you live in the old WBS 70, I mean how many rooms did you have and how many people lived there? And have you always lived in East-Berlin?

[Participant 4] No, I've always been a native of East-Berlin and never made it out, as you can see haha. So we had an apartment for rent, on the 4th floor and we were 4 people. My sister and I and our parents. We had 2 rooms, so we always had to come up with a lot of ideas how to manage that.

[Interviewer] Yes, I can imagine that. But where did your parents and your sister live?

[Participant 4] The three of us were staying in the living room and my sister had an extra mattress in the kitchen and was allowed to stay until 8 am in the living room before everyone went to bed. Well, and then my parents slept on the couch in the bedroom, but as kitchen and bedroom were connected, it was also difficult with privacy haha. Can you imagine... with the child next door, haha. And she's also gotten older, but because I was the older one, I was allowed to stay in that room and only when I moved out, my sister changed to my old room. Poor thing.

[Interviewer] Hallelujah, I can imagine! So zero privacy... ? Now another question, was there warm water in the apartments? Bath and shower or both?

[Participant 4] Yes, there was, however, warm water and a bathtub.

[Interviewer] How much did you pay for it?

[Participant 4] Oh, let me think, I think that was about 55 or 56 marks.

[Interviewer] And did you have access to a garden?

[Participant 4] No not at all.

[Interviewer] Okay, now again a completely different topic, you always had enough storage space in the apartment?

[Participant 4] Well, that was very difficult as well. So we were already very creative and then rebuilt all the cabinets and drawers to storage space or hung up our own shelves to the ceiling. It was still not enough, but we tried our best, at least. Well, and I became an construction engineer later on, so you really don't want to know what I have seen there in other prefabricated buildings, you can really tell, everyone filled the apartment until the roof and it was still not enough.

[Interviewer] Okay, and did your parents ever wanted to move?

[Participant 4] Of course, of course, but it did just not work. We were happy already to get that one.

[Interviewer] Okay, okay, I understand. Do you know anything else what you would have changed?

[Participant 4] Well, for example, we would have liked to install blinds, but we were not allowed to do so because the facade could not be changed from the outside. As it was all about the principle of the DDR and unity, we were not allowed to attract attention with our apartment, so they all had to look the same.

[Interviewer] Okay, thanks for all the details that was really helpful! Then I thank you and leave you alone again. Good afternoon!



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INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

A detailed survey about the former housing situation in East Germany

PARTICIPANT 5# 6# - 28th April 2018, 14:00pm, Berlin

[Interviewer] Hello, may I continue with you, you have already been listening all the time, right?

[Participant 5] Yeah, then I'll start right away haha. I still have all the questions in my head. In any case, I have always lived in Berlin as well, I mean in the Eastern part. And our apartment had 2 rooms, but we were 5 people.

[Participant 4] 5 people? Seriously Willi? Well, I am almost impressed! haha.

[Participant 5] Yes, well, we were glad that we had a place to stay! My parents did not have much money and that was all we got from the KWV. Well, my parents and sister were sharing a room and my brother and I were in the other room, the living room. And that's how it went, until my brother turned 18. He was kicked out of the apartment, right after his birthday. My parents moved to the living room then and my brother and I shared the bedroom. Everything was like that until I finally turned 18, then it was well-known, that I had to leave immediately as well.

[Participant 4] Well you could not do much in that bunker anyways, haha. Be glad, they wanted to get rid of you haha!

[Participant 5] But my sister was the luckiest of all of us, she had the bedroom for the last few years on her own and she was not thrown out in any way, she could rather decide for herself when she wanted to leave. Yeah, well anyhow, I moved out and luckily I had a girlfriend at the time and we were able to move in a 2 Room apartment for two of us, we were really lucky and that flat cost us about 60 marks, what was budget limit, but we made it and it was so much better than all my life before!

[Interviewer] Okay, thank you. So may I ask another question about the space? What about the storage space with you? In both apartments?

[Participant 5] Well there you ask something, so we just couldn't have stuff to store haha. For example, my mother had a fur coat and never knew what to do with it, because there was not room to hang anything and it was so bulky. And my brother and I only had to share clothes anyway.

[Participant 4] Ohhh yes, I remember that struggle as well! We also had a closet in the kitchen and the clothes smelled so badly from like oil and smoke, it was awful. But at least, we all had our own things unlike you haha.

[Interviewer] Okay, okay. The question of privacy is then unnecessary to ask... right?

[Participant 5] Yes, well, it was completely impossible, I was always really angry with my parents as a child, because I did not understand, why friends were not allowed to visit me at home. Or why other families had more space, but as a child, it is hard to get those things. And things like family-evenings were rare, but just imagine, try to get the interests of 5 people under one roof. Well that's not any different as today, I guess haha. But we all had to go to school in the morning and because of that, somebody always had to sleep early, so due to that, every evening at 8 o'clock we had to shut down whatever we were doing.

[Interviewer] Now another very different question, I just don't want to forget about it: Was there warm water in the apartment? Bath and shower or both?

[Participant 5] Yes, warm water and a bathtub with shower device.

[Interviewer] And did you have access to a garden?

[Participant 5] No.

[Interviewer] Okay, and did your parents ever think about moving?

[Participant 5] Absolutely, but thankfully, my parents held on until we were all over 18. I think if it would have taken any day longer, they probably would not be together anymore. Because as far as I can remember, they were actually always arguing and if someone wanted his or her peace, they had to go directly out of the apartment and in winter times, it's not really great to do so.

[Interviewer] Hmm yes understandable. Can you think of anything that you would have changed, as far as you can remember?

[Participant 5] Well, the issue about the space was so bad that you couldn't really notice any other problems, haha. So but, if you are already asking, the insulation was not great, but we were so many people in the interiors, that it was always warm and cosy. Haha. At least one advantage, you never froze, because nobody could sleep alone! By the way, talking about sleeping haha, so you can imagine that I could also never take a girl home, is that clear to you? So I was glad that I could finally leave with 18. Hahaha.

[Interviewer] Haha yes understand. Thank you so much for the help and all the details in every case! Have a beautiful day!



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INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

A detailed survey about the former housing situation in East Germany

PARTICIPANT 7# - 29th April 2018, 13:00pm, Berlin

[Interviewer] Good afternoon, thanks for taking time to help me out!

[Participant 7] Yes, sure! You need a few women for the quote, don't you!? Otherwise it is totally obsolete haha!

[Interviewer] Haha, right! So may I ask you at first - have you always lived in East Berlin?

[Participant 7] Yes always! Native East-Berliner.

[Interviewer] And how old were you when you moved into the WBS 70 building?

[Participant 7] Well back then, at the time I was 9 years old, that was 1963, we got a 2-bedroom apartment from the KVV and moved directly in. But as the building was just constructed, nothing worked haha. We were supposed to have warm water and everyone was looking forward to it, but that's not how it was in real life. But well, still better than carrying coal for the heating and living in that mouldy old building from before.

[Interviewer] Yes I understand. And how many people were you there then?

[Participant 7] We were 5.

[Interviewer] 5 ??

[Participant 7] Yeah, well, what did you think how times have been? My parents slept in the living room and the kids had self-built bunk-beds, one, two, three and we all had a place to sleep. You seem so shocked about that haha, but it was totally normal then! The apartment was about 50m², but look at me now. We survived that! You children are a bit spoiled today. Of course its better that way, I do not wish that to anyone, but still!

[Interviewer] Okay, so I do not have to ask about privacy, right?

[Participant 7] Haha no, we really could not afford such luxury! Privacy or romantic relationships were not essential for living and therefore we could not ask for that. It was the state's goal to give each family a house, not a luxury life.

[Interviewer] Okay wow understand. Now another question, how was it in the apartment with bath and shower or both?

[Participant 7] As I said, warm water did not exist yet, only a year later. But we had a bath with integrated shower. We had to do the laundry in the basement, since water was heated in containers, since the women always washed clothes and then hung in the attic - if there was space.

[Interviewer] Do you remember how much you paid?

[Participant 7] About more or less 60 marks. Although I believe there were families who paid less for the same size, we just did not have any contacts.

[Interviewer] And did you have access to a garden?

[Participant 7] No, nobody did

[Interviewer] Okay, and back to the apartment, how did life work with so many people in 2 rooms... regarding the storage space?

[Participant 7] Well, we were 5 children and spent the whole day on the street, playing there. My dad was at work all day, so my mother could enjoy most of the privacy, because she came earlier home than my dad. However, she also managed the whole household and was therefore so tired in the evening that she did not want to do anything anymore. My dad checked the news every evening on the television or in the newspaper in the living room, so we usually had to spend our time in the kitchen when he wanted to be alone. The small children, my brother and my sister, were 4 and 5 years old, so there were already sleeping in our room and we were not allowed to wake them, so actually only the kitchen was left. It all sounds very dramatic right now, but it was not. I really had a nice childhood!

[Interviewer] Okay wow ... yeah, understand. May I ask another topic, how was that with the storage space?

[Participant 7] Well you, we just did not change our shirts every day, like the kids today. We also shared a lot. Anyway, we just did not have the money to buy a lot of stuff. Well, but we had storage in the cellar for things like potatoes etc. But the whole apartment was really wet, I still don't know why and we moved out of the apartment, back to an older building before I was old enough to think about the reason or to ask. Of course, we would have liked to move out earlier, but 3-Room apartments were the most-wanted ones... And we were not able to afford a bigger apartment than that. So everything took quite a long time.

[Interviewer] Okay, and did your parents ever want to move?

[Participant 7] No never. They were really happy about the apartment! I mean, yes of course, it could have been better, but for the circumstances it was already fine!

[Interviewer] Okay, okay, I understand. But do you still remember something that bothered you?

[Participant 7] Well, a door between kitchen and living room would have been great sometimes haha. And warm water, but at least they solved that problem after a while. But overall it was really fine! It was not that dramatic as it might sound to you young people.

[Interviewer] Haha, thank you! Thanks for your time!



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INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

A detailed survey about the former housing situation in East Germany

PARTICIPANT 8_9# - 30th April 2018, 12:00pm, Berlin

[Interviewer] Hello, may I continue with both of you?

[Participant 8] Yeah, well, let's see where we get here haha.

[Interviewer] Well, I'm starting right now with questions about your person and the apartment, okay? So how old are you, if I may ask? And how old were you at the time of the Wall when you moved into the prefabricated building? And if you want to tell something about the apartment, you can start right away.

[Participant 8] Well okay, so I was 16 years old when I moved into the new building with my parents. We had 3 rooms. My sister and I lived in a room, but we were both the same age, so it was still okay. My parents had the bedroom for living and sleeping and the living room and kitchen were just the common areas.

[Participant 9] Yes that was similar to us, I was 20 at the time, just started my job and my parents got a 2-room apartment from KVV. I slept in the living room on the couch and my parents in the bedroom. But then, thank God, I quickly moved out because I could not do anything in the living room, without them noticing haha. So privacy was very difficult. Once, at night, I let my boyfriend sneak into the flat when my parents were asleep, my mother noticed it anyway, as mothers are, and the trouble about that lasted forever! So as I said, I lived there for 1 year with my parents and then, thank God, I got a 1-bedroom apartment in an old building.

[Interviewer] Okay, okay, you've always lived in the East, East Berlin, or later?

[Participant 8] No, always in the East.

[Participant 9] Yes me too.

[Interviewer] How did your parents feel about living there? How did your parents spend their free time?

[Participant 8] Well, they did not have any free time, my mother did the housekeeping, washing, cooking, etc. after work. My dad often had a beer with friends outside and he was also politically active for the party. That's why he was never really at home.

[Participant 9] My parents were not politically active haha. Not at all...! My parents were both teachers and worked in the same school. They came home after work at the same time and then spent most of the time in the living

room, until I went to bed in the evening, then they switched to the bedroom. My mother and I used to do the cooking and the dishes most of the time, and dad has been watching TV.

[Interviewer] Was there any warm water in the apartment? Bath and shower or both?

[Participant 8] We had hot water and a bathtub.

[Participant 9] Same for us.

[Interviewer] And how about the heating?

[Participant 9] We had a central heating system, which worked totally alright. Huge plus compared to our old apartment.

[Participant 8] Yes I could not agree more! I had to carry so many bags of coal in the past, it was insane! And from one day to another, we did not have to care about that anymore. Well okay, in some periods of time, the heating system was broken, but the KWV took care of that, so we did not have to pay the fixing costs. Thank god.

[Interviewer] And did you have any access to a garden?

[Participant 9] No

[Participant 8] Neither did we. But nobody had that, right?

[Participant 9] No, I do not think so

[External Person] The city workers had indeed planted a few trees that was enough haha!

[Interviewer] Okay, now again a completely different topic, you always had enough storage space in the apartment?

[Participant 8] Well, my sister and I just shared a closet but that was alright. Everything else was fine. Cannot complain now.

[Participant 9] I stored my things in the box underneath the couch and otherwise had my clothes in my parents' closet, that was also okay for me. We did not have that much anyway! Moreover we had the attic to hang our wet clothes and the cellar downstairs for old things.

[Interviewer] Okay, and did your parents ever want to move?

[Participant 8] No not at all. That was a lot better than it used to be! No coal heating, hot water and relatively much space compared to other kids in my class!

[Participant 9] No, my parents were happy too and even happier when I left! Haha. By the way, they still live there!

[Interviewer] What? wow. Then it really must not have been that bad?

[Participant 9] Yes, and even the rent is equivalent to the rental price of before! You really don't see that often in Berlin!

[Participant 8] Yes, with the old contracts, that's smart. We should have done the same haha.

[Interviewer] I'm done with my questions, thanks for everything and have a nice day!

Annexus 2

a brief description of the distribution of lifestyle groups, identified in the 1993, welfare survey in West-Germany.

In West Germany, three types of lifestyles of high cultural interest have been identified, four groups showed the strongest differentiation in modern experience and tension, and two types have more traditional orientations.

In summary, the totality of the selected types of lifestyles can be characterized as following:

- Type 1 (10%, n = 163) shows a strong social commitment, a strong interest in established culture and self-realization. Family life is in the foreground.
- Type 2 (13%, n = 195) focuses on professional commitment and success. This group maintains a high standard of living, lives in family households and has a strong need for information.
- Type 3 (10%, n = 154) represents a culturally interested, hedonistic type, with a high level of activity, a high standard of living and non-domestic recreational activities.
- Type 4 (14%, n = 220) is a family type who spends his free time in the home. Of interest are light, modern entertainment and an attractive appearance.
- Type 5, a relatively large group (15%, n = 226) is characterized by their preference for work and sport. Cultural and aesthetic preferences are less pronounced.
- Type 6 (4%, n = 63) is very expressive, versatile and staged through clothing and furnishing style.
- Type 7 (13%, n = 200) is the youngest type in the West and deviates from average in terms of idleness. Leisure, conviviality and friends are paramount.
- Type 8 (11%, n = 167) is a very safety-oriented, passive, and little-interested type.
- Type 9 (11%, n = 173), the home perimeter is in the foreground, it could be referred to as "recreational craftsmen and gardeners".

Annexus 3

a brief description of the distribution of lifestyle groups, identified in the 1993, welfare survey in East-Germany.

- Type 1 (12%, n = 97) has a high level of social commitment and self-fulfilment.
- Type 2 (19%, n = 154) is a simple, family-centred lifestyle, variety is an important life goal, leisure time is spent at home, action and science fiction on television (video) or as reading instil the desired tension.
- Type 3 (9%, n = 68) focuses the family, gainful employment and property topics are also relevant. In terms of cultural interests, it is a hybrid between modern and traditional entertainment. Attractiveness is a life goal of paramount importance.
- Type 4 (15%, n = 119) has a lot of social commitment, leadership and work are important as well. In leisure time, active sports and further education are in the foreground.
- Type 5 (7%, n = 59) is a very versatile, expressive and informed type.
- Type 6 (13%, n = 100) favours excitement and variety, especially with regard to media consumption or sport.
- Type 7 (7%, n = 56) preferences traditional forms of culture. Characteristics of this group are disinterest and domesticity; Economy and safety are top priority.
- Type 8 (10%, n = 77) a very safety-oriented group. Values social contacts, but no abnormalities.
- Type 9 (9%, n = 74), the "leisure-time hobbyist and gardener", lives in order in the family and community circle.

